The Temple of Set I

Michael Aquino

The Temple of Set

- by -

Michael A. Aquino

Volume I: Text & Plates

2nd Edition

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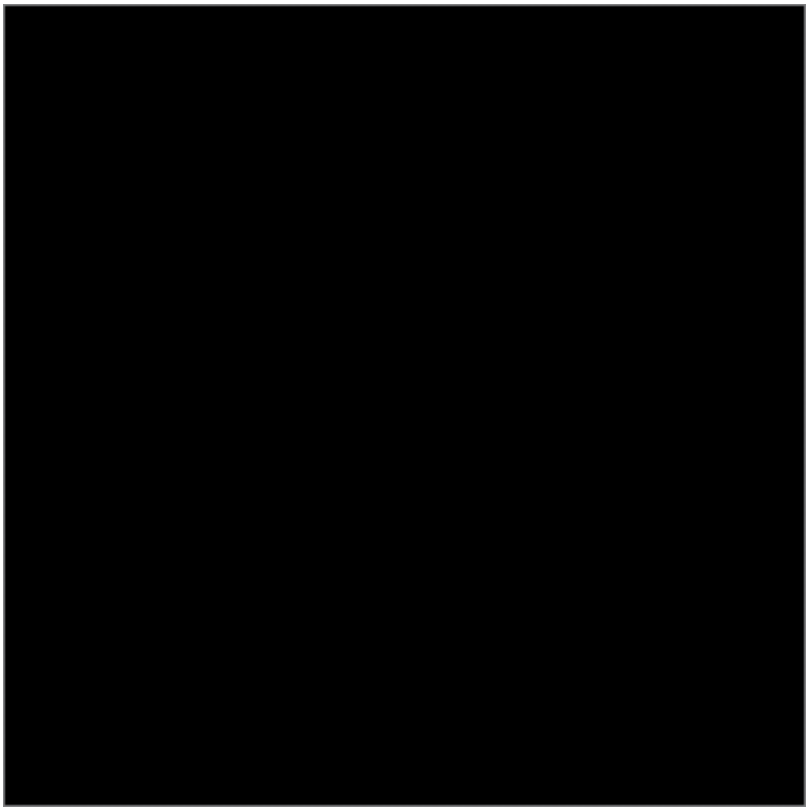

Dedicated To

Lilith

Xa-Nepthys, Daughter of Set

Maga V° of Arkte

Grand Master of the Order of the Vampyre

Ulbandi, Valie of the Stars

Krel Atlan of Sith

Guardian of the Rainbow Bridge

- and in the United Kingdom of Earth -

Baroness of Rachane, Argyllshire, Scotland

- and of my heart -

Eternally Beloved

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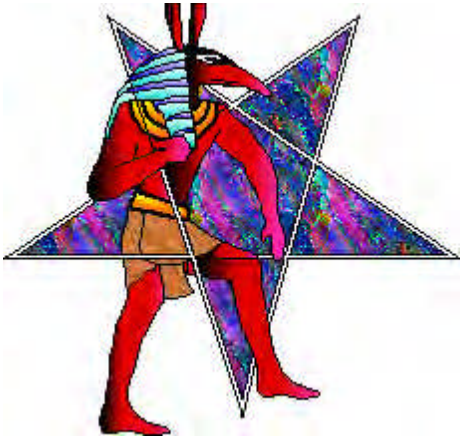

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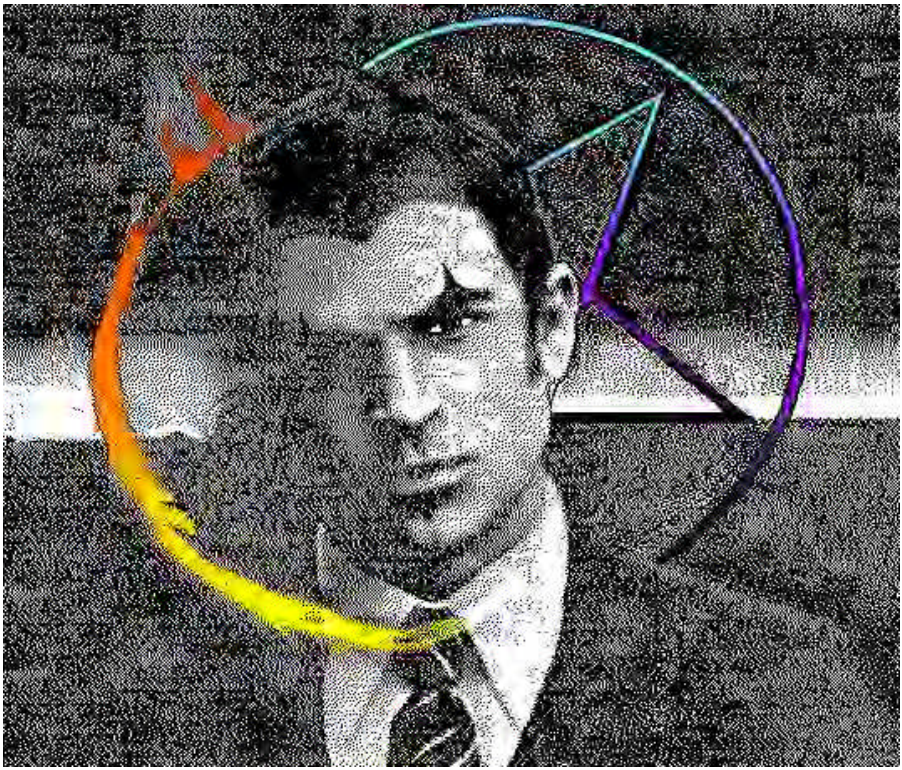


Preface

In *The Marvelous Land of Oz* (1904) L. Frank Baum had his imperiled hero Tip (the future

Princess Ozma) tie together two sofas, palm branches, and the stuffed head of a gump (in Oz an

elk-like creature) with rope and clothesline, sprinkle it with magic

powder to bring it to life, and

then use it to fly away to safety. 1 Nevertheless, as evident from the improvised haste of its

assembly, the gump was sorely wanting in ærodynamics, and only barely brought its passengers

to a landing before falling apart. Tip granted its wish to be disassembled, though the stuffed head

remained alive and continued to startle bypassers with comments throughout, presumably, the

rest of the thirteen original Oz books.

The Church of Satan, founded in 1966, was a bit like Baum's gump. It was also thrown

together in improvised haste from a variety of vaguely- or unrelated concepts and then used to

transport its riders on an unpredictably soaring, plunging, and haphazard journey throughout

the next nine years until its own catastrophic crash in 1975. Like the gump, it **did** complete the

journey; also like the gump, it is something of an amazement that it got off the ground at **all**,

much less flew as long and as far as it did. 2 The story of this "long, strange trip" is told in *The*

Church of Satan, my companion history to *The Temple of Set*.

I make this point because the Temple of Set, when **it** was founded in 1975, was an entirely

different phenomenon. Organizationally it had the benefit of the complete experience of the

Church of Satan upon which to draw: to improve in part, to discard in part, and of course to

disregard when building anew. Even more crucially the Temple had from its inception a crystal-

clear definition and understanding of its metaphysical authenticity and license. Its evolution

over the next quarter-century would see refinements in the organization and increasing

exploration and enhancement of the philosophy, but the original bases of both would never

change.

The differences between the two organizations will also be mirrored in the contrast between

The Church of Satan and *The Temple of Set*. The former is a roller-coaster ride of alternately

1 The gump was included in Walt Disney's 1985 film *Return to Oz*, being a composite of Baum's *Marvelous Land of*

Oz and *Ozma of Oz*. In this film Dorothy Gale was substituted for Tip as the gump's creator & rider.

2 Arguably its stuffed head - an Anton LaVey fan club using the Church's name - has also remained "alive and

commenting" since the authentic Church's 1975 conclusion.

serious, philosophical, humorous, tragic, ironic, heroic, embarrassing, frightening, and startling

personalities, concepts, and events. "If I hadn't lived through it myself," more than one old

Satanist has remarked to me upon reading *COS*, "I would have found it almost too bizarre to

believe."

The Temple of Set will not be such a rollicking reading experience, though I daresay it will be

a substantially more searching and informative one. Its purpose is first to explain how the

Temple came into being and evolved organizationally, then to summarize its founding/core

principles. Neither of these should be considered an “endgame”: The Temple constantly changes

and improves its internal design, and its philosophy also continues to be refined, improved, and

corrected as present and future Setians see the need and opportunity to do so.

Certainly the initial years of the Temple were not all a smooth, steady, unified climb to the

stars. Both senior and junior Setians have had their flaws and failings as well as their talents and

strengths, and as a consequence the Temple has had its share of disappointments along with its

successes. But without exception each difficulty has been honestly confronted as a learning

experience; the result has consequently been an institution that much more substantial and

resilient.

An additional distinction between the two books is that while the former can indeed claim to

embrace the entire history of the Church of Satan, this book could never hope to fulfill a similar

goal with regard to the Temple of Set. The Church of Satan was a fairly simple, linear story, to

which a relatively small number of individuals made significant contributions over a brief period

of time. The Temple of Set may be more likened to an explosion within the heads of a great many

individuals of rich and diverse backgrounds, yielding a mix of ideas that would constantly be

shared, reconsidered, and compounded.

The extent of this corpus of knowledge is already staggering, and of course still continues its

exponential growth throughout a variety of communications and records systems. Among these

are the *Jeweled Tablets of Set* standing reference volumes; the archives and continuing issues of

the *Scroll of Set* newsletter; the Temple's Internet public website and private "Intranet"; the

documents and periodicals of the Temple's many Orders, Elements, and Pylons; Temple and

specialized reading lists, international/regional/local conclave events, and the overwhelming

amount of personal and interpersonal workings and dialogues involving individual Setians.

When I undertook to write this *Temple of Set,* therefore, I knew immediately that its focus

would need to be more a personal perspective, more an overview of what during the adventure of

the Temple to date has seemed to me to be particularly notable: not just because of drama or

colorfulness, but because it played some necessary or crucial part in the unfolding of the

adventure. It will, I think, also be my initiatory testament.

As a comprehensive history, *The Church of Satan* can be read by anyone - Setian, Satanist, or

profane - and be expected to reasonably communicate its story in proportion to the intelligence

of each such reader.

The Temple of Set presents a somewhat different problem. While I intend that this book be as

direct and unambiguous as possible, Setian philosophy requires "initiatory consciousness" - not

only an interest in the subject matter but both the intellectual and the metaphysical capacity to

comprehend it in its ultimate sense. Within the Temple, persons possessing such capacity are

referred to as "Elect" and are deemed to have potential for initiation. Those lacking it, best

intentions notwithstanding, would find the initiatory experience bewildering, frustrating, and

meaningless. Accordingly the Temple endeavors to not admit them, or to disaffiliate them as

soon as possible if accidentally affiliated.

It is much the same with this book. There are aspects of it that may either enter your mind

like flame or just leave you confused and annoyed. My pleasure in the former case; my apologies

in the latter.

The Temple of Set is divided into two main sections:

I. Construction: The first is an overview of the origins and structural development of the

institution. While it begins in 1975, it has no timeline-cutoff, since it is more of a conceptual

maturation than a chronicle.

II. Concepts: The second is an introduction to and summary of basic Setian philosophy and

its application. It is adapted from my *Black Magic*, the preliminary text of the *Crystal Tablet of*

Set, that part of the *Jeweled Tablets of Set* initiatory encyclopædia provided to new Setians Iůpon their admission to the Temple.

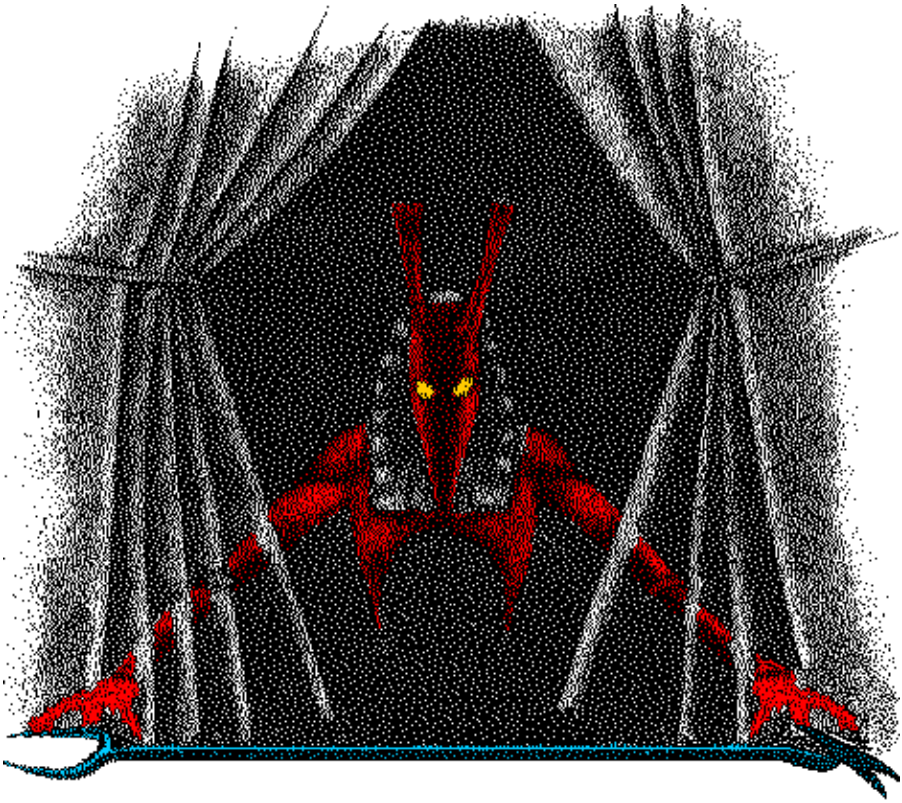
If you are considering Setian initiation, this book may help you make your decision one way

or the other. If you are not, it may serve to explain and clarify the Temple of Set to you. If it

achieves these goals, it will have justified itself.

Xeper.

San Francisco, North Solstice L ÆS



Part I: Construction

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1: The Primal Conflict

The story of the Temple of Set begins in 1966 of what archæologists, in an effort to be

nonsectarian, refer to as the Common Era (CE). In that year Anton Szandor LaVey founded the

Church of Satan in San Francisco.

LaVey, an imposing, congenial man with a carnival and circus background, had for many

years been an enthusiastic but cynical devotee of the occult. He accumulated a unique library

containing many works on the more peculiar and obscure facets of human nature, together with

the major classics of traditional occultism. Disappointed with the lack of sophistication and

practical relevance he saw in existing occult organizations, he decided

that he would have to start

one of his own to remedy the problem.

In the early 1960s, therefore, he began to conduct “midnight magic seminars” at his home in

San Francisco’s Richmond District. By 1965 these had coalesced into a formal “Magic Circle”.

The success of this Circle prompted him to found the Church of Satan on Walpurgisnacht (April

30) of 1966, which henceforth became known as the Year I *Anno Satani* (AS).

Initially the Church remained a local organization. Group rituals were held Friday midnights,

while during the week Anton gave lectures and taught classes to aspiring Witches and Warlocks.

This fascinating and controversial organization won its share of publicity around the country

and abroad, and soon many curious individuals were writing to San Francisco to find out how

they too could become Satanists. In 1970 Anton published the *Satanic Bible* to summarize the

basic tenets of his philosophy.

The *Satanic Bible* did not portray Satan and his fellow dæmons as actual “supernatural”

beings, but rather as symbols and metaphors for hedonistic self-indulgence. Other religions in

general - and Christianity in particular - were not considered to be deadly foes; instead they were

mocked and dismissed as sanctimonious and hypocritical frauds.

The *Satanic Bible* went on, however, to promise results from the practice of simplified and

standardized magical rituals. Such rites invoked Satan as well as various other gods and dæmons

from many mythological traditions, appealing for and/or commanding their aid in curses,

seductions, cures, and the like.

There was thus an oddly-inconsistent feature to the Church of Satan's philosophy: On one

hand it professed psychodramatic atheism, while on the other it assumed the literal existence of

dæmonic personages with the ability to hear invocations and the disposition to respond to

evocations.

By 1970 Anton LaVey and his wife Diane had begun to feel the strain of endless hospitality, so

a decision was made to cease most of the activities at their home in favor of sponsoring local

units or "Grottos" of the Church elsewhere in the United States. From 1971 to 1975 the Church

thus consisted of a San Francisco headquarters plus some five to ten Grottos in various

metropolitan areas. The Church rose from an initial San Francisco membership of about 50 to a

nationwide average of about 300 through 1975. There was a turnover of perhaps 30% per year,

reflecting the casual, fickle attitude of many of the lower-level members.

By 1973 Grottos had been organized in San Francisco, Santa Cruz/San Jose, Los Angeles,

Denver, Dayton, Detroit, New York, Louisville, and Washington, D.C. Like the membership-at-

large, these tended to be unstable, short-lived groups, surviving and prospering only as long as a

charismatic Grotto Leader was in office.

By 1975 Anton LaVey, having presided over nine years of mercurial individuals and Grottos,

reluctantly concluded that, while the philosophy of Satanism had lost none of its popular appeal,

the Church of Satan itself was largely a failure. A small, stable nucleus of serious and sincere

devotees had indeed developed, but for the most part the Church had served to attract merely

fad-followers, egomaniacs, and assorted oddballs whose primary interest in becoming

“Satanists” lay in being able to flash their membership cards for cocktail-party notoriety. Anton

decided that the Church might as well be converted to a vehicle for his personal financial benefit,

hence in May of 1975 he announced a decision to sell the Satanic Priesthood and all higher

degrees for funds or objects of value.

Upon founding the Church, Anton had claimed for himself the titles of High Priest of Satan

and Magus of the Age of Satan. By 1969 he had begun to ordain others to the Satanic Priesthood

(the Priesthood of Mendes), and in 1970 he formalized an initiatory structure of five degrees:

Satanist I°, Warlock/Witch II°, Priest/Priestess of Mendes III°, Magister IV°, and Magus V°.

Advancement to the II° was based upon a fairly basic examination concerning the contents of the

Satanic Bible, but Anton was extremely strict concerning ordination to

the Priesthood. Perhaps

twenty individuals attained the III° between 1966 and 1975, while during the same period Anton

conferred only four IV°s - one of which upon myself.

Anton's 1975 decision to sell the degrees confounded the nucleus of sincere Satanists, myself

included, who saw in it a critical corruption of the very institution whose incorruptibility and

condemnation of hypocrisy had made it so refreshing and exhilarating.

Attempting to reform the Church was impossible; Anton had incorporated it under his

exclusive, personal control in 1971, a time when none of us had remotely anticipated his 1975

decision. Our only option was to leave. By mid-June 1975, therefore, virtually the entire

nationwide Priesthood of the Church had resigned *en masse*. The Church of Satan as a viable,

functional organization was dead, save that the LaVeys continued to use the corporate name and

image for private gain as a "business partnership", a status upon which they formally agreed by

contract in 1985.

In 1988 Diane [LaVey] Hegarty sued Anton to dissolve the business and divide its assets

between the two of them, and this was so ordered by the San Francisco Superior Court on

October 28, 1991. Anton subsequently filed for bankruptcy for himself and the Church of Satan,

and the U.S. Bankruptcy Court so ordered, under the dissolution Chapter 7 of U.S. bankruptcy

law, on April 29, 1993. Legally as well as essentially and organizationally, therefore, the Church

of Satan no longer exists, though continuing attempts to exploit its name might pretend

otherwise.

As is detailed in *The Church of Satan*, three tensions and dilemmæ inherent in that

institution came to what might be called “critical Black Mass” by 1975. All were the inevitable, if

initially neither anticipated nor appreciated consequence of the Church’s increasing

sophistication as it evolved beyond old stereotypes of metaphysics and magic:

(1) Was the Church of Satan theistic or atheistic?

(a) Did it believe in Satan and his fellow dæmons as actual intelligent, active,

willful entities extant in time and space? Or did it disbelieve in the

existence of such beings [along with the Judæo-Christian God], and just

use them for spooky window-dressing in rituals that were merely

imaginative psychodramas?

(b) In this same vein, was there perhaps a “two-tiered” attitude within the

Church, whereby its High Priest and Priesthood indeed privately believed

in Satan and other dæmons, while at the same time presenting to the

public an attitude of atheistic satire? Per this interpretation, ordinary

members of the Church were initially/generally treated much as the

public, yet selectively introduced to the deeper, true metaphysics as they

might show themselves capable of understanding and accepting it.

(2) The original Church of Satan in San Francisco had been inaugurated, part

seriously, part whimsically, by Anton Szandor LaVey in 1966 as largely a personal

vehicle for advertisement and profit, based upon his colorful personality, extensive

knowledge of the Black Arts and occultism generally, and atmospheric house in

which to give lectures, hold meetings, and perform rituals. However, as over the

years the Church expanded beyond San Francisco, through individuals and groups

having little or no direct exposure to these specific original allures, it began to

become more of an impersonal institution united by common beliefs and ideas. Its

focus was indeed Satan; Anton was revered as his High Priest and Earthly deputy

only. Correspondingly the decentralized Church behaved more like a nonprofit

organization than a profitable business.

(3) The more the Church grew, and the more Anton himself became a well-known

popular icon, the more withdrawn and private he became. In part this was

understandably a reaction to years of being iconized, lionized, media-exploited, and

sometimes threatened. He simply became weary of it, exhausted by

the demands of

having to constantly keep up his Mephistophelian glamor-image. Unfortunately

this reclusiveness also extended to the Church of Satan itself beyond his old,

familiar entourage in San Francisco. He gradually avoided direct contact with the

more distant membership, which had the dual consequence of forcing them to rely

more on their initiative and increasing his suspicion of their uncontrolled

independence accordingly.

These factors culminated first in Anton's 1974 "Phase IV" policy paper to the Church, in

which the formal standing and authority of non-entourage Church officials and groups were

weakened in favor of an informal "Movement" whose preferential membership and influence

would once again be Anton's sole decision. 3 His next, and as it turned out explosive action was to

attempt to destroy the independent significance and structure of the Church's initiatory degree

system, by also making both the definition and the bestowal of such titles merely his personal

whim. 4

In terms of my personal involvement, *The Church of Satan* culminated with my June 10, 1975

letter to Anton and Diane LaVey rejecting what I regarded as their critical corruption of the

3 Appendix #116, *The Church of Satan.*

Church of Satan, and simultaneous letter to the Church membership announcing my disavowal

of the organization controlled by them. These were followed by many other Satanists'

resignations, either immediately or after waiting to see if Anton LaVey could or would explain

and/or correct his startling policy decisions and announcements.

As copies of these resignations continued to pour into my mailbox, I realized that I was being

looked to to provide some sort of corrective/alternative course of action. Frankly I felt both ill-

qualified and ill-disposed to do this.

For the past six years the Church of Satan had seemed not only unique but indeed

metaphysically sacred to me. I had never regarded it as "just an organization" alongside which

other, similar Satanic churches could just as validly exist. Correspondingly I did not regard

Anton LaVey as simply a charismatic individual or even genius, but as the anointed personal

deputy of Satan himself. I had now spoken in my Magisterial capacity to deny both of these

legitimacies henceforth, but that was not at all the same thing as proposing to personally replace

them.

Beyond that I was grappling with intense personal shock and heartbreak. My association with

Anton and Diane LaVey had become almost as close as to my own

parents, and quite obviously

the affection had been mutual. I was bitterly angry and depressed at the circumstances which

had now shattered this relationship. I could only hope that at some, probably distant future time

the LaVeys might come to understand my plight and decision, and even see it as the most

constructive course for the legacy we had all worked so hard those many years to build.

Nevertheless I had to begin thinking about some sort of “reformed Church of Satan” to

replace the corrupted one. To other Satanists I referred to the concept as a “Second Church of

Satan”, although this was only a descriptive term.

And of course the central question remained unanswered. If the Devil had indeed

consecrated the original Church of Satan [and its High Priest], how was I or anyone else to

conclude that he would now transfer this authority to a successor Church?

During my tenure in the Church I had of course practiced both Lesser and Greater Black

Magic[5] , the latter much less frequently but also on at least two occasions - the Workings of the

Diabolicon and the Ninth Solstice Message - quite overwhelmingly. Yet beyond a basic

conviction that there was thus something indeed to be said for GBM as a technique, I had by and

large not aggressively explored it. Most of my Church time had been taken up with purely-

administrative responsibilities. On the magical side of things I had

indulged myself only in

occasional LBM experiments and some philosophical/historical/ theoretical writings in the

Cloven Hoof and personal correspondence. 6

In March 1975, however, after being advised of its existence by Priest Robert Ethel of the

Washington, D.C. Asmodeus Grotto, I tracked down a copy of Meric. Casaubon's *John Dee's*

Actions With Spirits, a 1659 facsimile reprint, at a little occult store in San Pedro, California. The

book looked just like every magician wants a grimoire to look: big, thick, heavy, and leather-

bound. I could hardly wait to "take the original Keys out for a test drive", and did so that very

evening at one of the old artillery batteries at Fort MacArthur where I had conducted many a Call

to Cthulhu during Army Reserve weekends with the infamous 306th Psychological Operations

5 **Lesser Black Magic** (LBM) is the influencing of beings, processes, or objects in the Objective Universe (OU) by

the application of obscure physical or behavioral laws. **Greater Black Magic** (GBM) is the causing of change to

occur in the Subjective Universe (SU) in accordance with the will. This change in the SU may cause a similar and

proportionate change in the OU. GBM involves the summoning of both intensively rational (*dianoia*) and

consequently intuitive (*nœsis*) concentration of thought. Part II contains a detailed discussion of these concepts.

6 This is fairly extensively documented in *The Church of Satan*.

Battalion. 7 The result was nothing short of astonishing. The following day, March 9th, I jotted

down the results:

For the first Working I decided to pronounce the 19th Key, invoking ZIM (the 13th Æthyr).

Cornu required twice before any response.

Then the result: I recall coming, under hazy circumstances, to a large wooden-beamed hall in

which were seated a number of men around a table. I knew them to be the "Secret Chiefs" of the

"White" tradition of whom Aleister Crowley and others have spoken.

I suggested that I might be allowed to join them, sensing that they did not immediately

perceive my identity as a Magister Templi of the Left-Hand Path. But there was some dissent, as

though some of them were wary of me.

Finally I revealed myself as a Magister Templi. They reacted more negatively than before,

donning robes of various colors. I responded by donning my own black/blue robe, whereupon

there was a reaction by them of even stronger dislike. I responded with anger in turn.

There was a violent conflagration, the hall collapsed, and I recall nothing further. 8

This was no mere dream; it was a rational experience, perfectly clear to my normal senses. It

was very "crude", but then I hardly expected anything polished to come of a first Working with a

new magical system. I drew no particular meaning from the sequence itself; what was significant

to me was the sharpness and clarity of the entire experience - far more so than Workings

conducted with the Crowley Keys in the *Equinox* or the LaVey Keys in the *Satanic Bible*.

I decided not to immediately mention this to Anton LaVey. It was hardly politic to recount

such an experiment to the author of the *Satanic Bible*, at least not until I had explored and

understood it better. Robert Ethel, who himself possessed a copy of the Casaubon volume, would

be a more suitable correspondent. Upon returning to Santa Barbara I wrote him:

In case you thought I passed right over your discovery of the Casaubon reprint mentioned in

your December letter, I did not. But it has taken me this long to locate a copy, inspect it for

accuracy, and form some preliminary conclusions concerning it.

From what I have read in the book so far - coupled with results I have obtained from an

experimental operation with one of the Keys - it is a tremendously powerful text. The secret to its

proper use lies, I believe, in the disassociation of its implications from hybrid/Cabalistic jargon.

This includes the pronouncing of the Keys themselves (which, from Mathers' time onward, have

been spoken per the letters of the Hebrew alphabet and not according to the simple phonetics

implied by each letter in the text).

There are two general points to be considered. The first is that which I brought out in the

"Caucus Race" article in the *Hoof*, i.e. that Dee, Kelley, and Casaubon

would have been playing

with fire [at the stake] had they not bent over backwards to couch their texts in “good Christian”

terminology. [One could say much the same for John Milton, whose *Paradise Lost* is an excellent

example of such lip service.]

The second point is that Dee and Kelley were themselves necessarily of a Judaic/Christian

educational background. They would have been inclined to interpret extraordinary contacts in line

with the myths and legends most familiar to them. In going through this reprint of Casaubon, I

have attempted to evaluate each “Angelic” incident in a more empirical frame of reference. A

pattern is emerging that I find very exciting, but I must proceed further with the correlation

before I commit myself to conclusions. 9

I had then relegated Mr. Casaubon to my bookshelf against some presumed future leisure

time for such enjoyable explorations. I took him out just once again that spring, to activate a

GBM working recorded as *The Sphinx and the Chimæra* (Appendix #1).

7 See Chapter #31 of *The Church of Satan.*

8 Aquino, M.A., Working Record, Enochian Keys, March 9, 1975.

9 Letter, M.A. Aquino to Robert Ethel, March 12, X/1975.

This working was quite spectacular as an experiment in formalized rational and intuitive

thought. Scholarly research preceded the working; then GBM was used

to overlay it with

enlightened awareness. [This concept is discussed at greater length in Part II.]

As the Church of Satan's 1975 crisis began to unfold, I attempted to comprehend and address

it reasonably and practically through correspondence and discussion. But as the situation

worsened, I felt increasingly the need to seek guidance from the authority of the Church's very

existence, Satan himself. It seemed to me that if the Church were authentic - and, for that

matter, ultimately so beyond Anton LaVey's current representation of it as merely his personal

creation and vehicle - the Prince of Darkness would have to step in. As the senior Master next to

Anton himself, I concluded that the responsibility to seek such a GBM resolution fell to me.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of a Master IV° [as beyond a Priest III°] in the

Church of Satan was Familiarity with [or, as Aleister Crowley might have put it, "Knowledge and

Conversation of"] the essential Powers of Darkness themselves, including their primal energizing

source, Satan. The Priesthood of Mendes III°, by contrast, could perceive and represent these

Powers, but not consciously meld with them. Perhaps the most famous modern example of the

facility of a Master in this regard is Crowley's *Liber 418: The Vision and The Voice*, in which his

own initiation at this level is recorded.

I chose the night of June 21-22, X/197510 as an appropriate occasion

for the working. The

time/events following my June 10th letter to Anton and Diane had suggested to me that an

ordinary solution was increasingly improbable, and that evening - as the Summer Solstice and

anniversary of my own ordination to the Priesthood five years previously - seemed “traditionally”

respectful. I cannot recall the date having any other significance to me at the time than this.

At midnight I was alone in my home at 302 East Calle Laureles, Santa Barbara - save only for

my beloved Irish Setter, Brandy. As was my habit with GBM workings, I put a phonograph

record on the turntable and set it to endlessly repeat. I chose a selection which I had never used

before [and, out of personal regard for the result, have never used since]: Ralph Vaughan

Williams’ *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*.

My altar was located in the living room of the house. I opened the working in the traditional

Satanic Mass, then spoke aloud the First Part of the *Word of Set*. 11

I felt an impulse to enter my study - “the Sanctum” as I nicknamed it - and with Brandy

curled up at my feet, sat down at my desk and took up pen and paper. Then, over the next four

hours, I wrote down the words of *The Book of Coming Forth by Night*.

The experience was neither one of “dictation” [as in Aleister Crowley’s *Book of the Law*

working] or of “automatic writing” after the spiritualist fashion. The thoughts, words, phrases

seemed to me indistinct from my own, yet impressed me as both unique and necessary, as

though no other sequence would do. Frequently I paused for a time, waiting for what might

occur next. Three times I got up from the desk entirely - once to find a small book by Wallis

Budge, *Egyptian Language*, and leaf through it until I found the sentence that had gnawed at

me, copying its hieroglyphs into my writing; once to trace an exact copy of a scrawled passage

from the *Book of the Law* into the narrative; and finally, at its apparent end, to place a small

piece of my own artwork (which I had done sometime previously, merely on a meditative whim)

as a "seal". By about 4 AM the document was completed.

10 Internally, per a passage in the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, the Temple of Set has continued to use the annual

dating system which, in Roman numerals, commenced from the founding of the Church of Satan in 1966 (as the

year I *Anno Satani*). However the Temple changed that "*AS*" to "*ÆS*" (for *Æ*on of Set) after June 22, X/1975. For

ease of reference in this ebook, all years are indicated in profane (CE = Common Era) numerals, i.e. 1975, unless

there is a magical reason for using the *Æ*S system.

11 See Appendices #3 and #4 for the text and discussion of the *Word of Set* version of the "Enochian Keys".

2: The North Solstice X Working

The Greater Black Magical working record *The Book of Coming Forth by Night* was not only

a revelation to and reorientation of myself personally, but also the founding authority and

philosophical cornerstone of the Temple of Set. Appendix #2 contains the text of the working,

followed by my most recent analysis and commentary concerning it in Appendix #3.

In this chapter I would like to consider the phenomenon of the working *per se*. What was it?

What sort of validity, if any, can be assigned to it? Should this be different for others besides

myself? Should it be regarded as a time-specific document or as something with “timeless”

relevance and application?

In Chapter #1 I said that there was nothing overtly sensational, supernatural, or

melodramatic about the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* working. I simply sat down and wrote

it. It was not dictated to me by a materialized Egyptian god, nor did the words burn themselves

into the pages like the fabled Hebrew Ten Commandments. The

thoughts were “comfortable”

ones, comprehensible to me within my preexisting frames of reference.

What, then, distinguished the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* from a mere meditation or

exercise in creative writing? No more and no less than a sensation I had then, and conviction

ever since, that something beyond Michael Aquino was generating it.

In his excellent work *The Psychology of Anomalous Experience*, Graham Reed (Professor of

Psychology at York University, Canada) surveys the many types of human thought-experiences

beyond the ordinary emotional or rational. “Anomalous,” he begins, “means irregular, distorted,

or unusual”. 12 He goes on to note that these classifications may be in the individual’s own

opinion, or in that of parts or the whole of his surrounding society. While some such experiences

may indeed be symptoms of various forms of mental illness, others are quite routinely a function

of healthy thinking and are not at all pathological.

We are all familiar with AEs such as dreams/daydreams, “trick of the mind” visual/audible/

conceptual illusions [as in stage magic presentations, paradoxes, distortions of perspective, etc.],

memory surprises, and *déjà vu*. None of these are cause for concern unless they become

unusually frequent or otherwise overwhelm “ordinary” thought. The area into which *The Book of*

Coming Forth by Night falls, however, has to do with what Reed calls “experience of self”. It is:

... fundamental to the whole of the individual's psychic life. It underlies, determines, and colours

all other experiences. Like other critical aspects of mind, we take it for granted and are only aware

of it when it is disturbed in some way. It is almost impossible for a person in normal health to

12 Reed, Graham, *The Psychology of Anomolous Experience* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), page #9.

imagine what it would feel like **not** to be experiencing oneself as oneself. This is doubtless because

imagining, like all other mental activities, normally occurs in the context of self-experience.

Clearly the experience of self is inextricably involved in all other cognitive activities and states

because it underlies them and acts as a selector, integrator, and synthesizer. In a sense all the

experiences we care to discuss affect, or are affected by, this central experience. So it would be

possible to discuss it partially in terms of, for example, attention, registration, memory, thinking,

or emotion. Being oneself determines how we attend and to what we pay attention. It is a product

of all our stored experiences, and it determines our emotional responses. At the same time the

idea "me" is a concept, the development and range of which can be considered like other

concepts. 13

Reed delineates four different types of anomaly from this normal, comprehensive "me": (1)

inability to distinguish oneself from one's environment, (2) attribution

of personal thoughts/

imagery/actions to external forces, (3) experience of a detachment or separation of the self, and

(4) concern that one's experience of self/reality is not in fact valid.

The first - the "blurring of *ego* boundaries" 14 - is characteristic of clinical schizophrenia, but

in a contrasting and even highly-respected sense also encompasses the dissolution of the self

into the "higher unity" of the cosmos as, for example, in *nirvana*.

The third - detachment or separation of the self - also takes a variety of forms, from the

dream "out of the body" experience to the more elaborate, subtle, and metaphysical concepts of

"astral selves", the Egyptian *ka*, the sinister *Doppelgänger*, and in general the soul/mind/body

distinction.

The fourth - doubt of the experience of reality - raises the question in one's mind whether his

entire experience of being, and that which is outside it, is truthful. Most recently this theme was

dramatically romanced in the *Matrix* series of movies.

As for the second, it is in many respects both the most extraordinary and the most

troublesome of the four. Here we find people who are convinced that they [or others] have been

"programmed" by the government or aliens to think or act in certain ways, from sex slaves to

"Manchurian Candidates". Some may feel that their own thoughts are being sucked away by

"thought vampires", or that other people or beings are able to "tune

into" their privacy just as on

a radio channel.

The second type also embraces, however, metaphysical or religious experiences of a

"revelation" nature. These may range [as historically in various religions] from possession or

incarnation to prophecy, "channeling", or simply perceiving one or more Great Truths. Far from

being regarded as psychopathic maniacs [although they might well have been in their own day!],

such representatives as Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, the Buddha, Joan of Arc, the

Mahdi, and Joseph Smith are popularly regarded with superstitious awe. Their less-successful

competitors throughout the ages, of course, remain recorded as only heretics, weirdoes, frauds,

or madmen/women.

There are two other interesting features of most "revelations":

First, as they are presumed to spring from a supernatural, all-knowing source, they are [at

least by believers] not subject to the usual sort of factual questioning or analysis. They are to be

accepted as an act of faith. Inaccuracies or inadequacies in them are ignored or assumed to be

"revealed in their truth and understanding" at some divinely-determined future time.

Secondly, some adherents rely upon a steady stream of such manifestations to keep the

belief-system going. Hence the series of Hebrew prophets, the visions and miracles throughout

13 *Ibid.*, page #112.

14 Cf. P. Federn, *Ego Psychology and the Psychoses* (NY: Basic Books, 1952).

the New Testament, and of course the “Book of Revelation” telling Christians how the whole

show is eventually going to climax.

The Book of Coming Forth by Night fits Reed’s definition of an “experience of self/second

type/revelation anomaly”, but does not exhibit or depend upon the two sub-features described

above. It has been extensively and exhaustively examined, and compared to other perspectives

on reality, by many Setians [and nonSetians] over the decades - and again here in Appendix #3.

Also it has apparently passed well the test of time as a stand-alone document, requiring neither

sequel nor supplement to retain its usefulness and relevance to Setian philosophy.

Now I return to my own sensation, reaction, and opinion the morning of June 22, 1975.

Frankly I didn’t know what to make of the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*. It was certainly

not at all what I had expected [although I hadn’t known **what** to expect the evening before].

Obviously it contained elements of ancient Egypt, Aleister Crowley, and the Church of Satan. But

it mingled these in what was to me an odd and unfamiliar way. In some ways it seemed ancient,

in other ways futuristic. It seemed to be speaking to me personally, but also to as-yet-

unidentified others. It contained cosmology, philosophy, magic, evolution, cryptography,

promises, and threats. Summarily it pretty well upset my entire applecart.

I did, however, have two immediate impressions: one, that it was authentic - what it claimed

to be - a communication from the Egyptian god Set; two, that I myself must take it wholly and

sincerely to heart. Even today, after all these years of examination of and reflection upon the

Book of Coming Forth by Night, I cannot explain or defend these convictions, but simply recall

them.

In his “Preliminary Remarks” to his *Book 4*, Part I, Aleister Crowley discussed at some length

the ecstatic vision which each founder of a religion seemed at one point in his life to experience:

Finally something happens whose nature may form the subject of a further discussion later on.

For the moment let it suffice to say that this consciousness of the ego and the non-ego, the seer

and the thing seen, the knower and the thing known, is blotted out.

There is usually an intense light, an intense sound, and a feeling of such overwhelming bliss

that the resources of language have been exhausted again and again in the attempt to describe it.

It is an absolute knock-out blow to the mind. It is so vivd and tremendous that those who

experience it are in the gravest danger of losing all sense of proportion.

By its light all other events of life are as darkness. 15

For me the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* was something like that. I might try to discuss it

theoretically and practically with others, but beyond and beneath any and all such sensible

courses of action, the thing had somehow seared me to the heart of my soul. Henceforth

visualizing existence without this as its centerpiece would be quite inconceivable.

But on the morning of June 22, I did not pursue such an ominous course of reflection. More

important to me at the time was that I had asked questions about the crisis in the Church of

Satan, and they had been answered. It was now time to share that answer with others, which led

in due course to the [re]founding of the Temple of Set.

It later seemed to me that there might be much more to the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*

than just its reading. In this, admittedly, I had the model of Aleister Crowley's attitude towards

the *Book of the Law*, which he approached as a complex puzzle to be deciphered and analyzed -

and so he did, over the years and in several editions of commentaries.

My first detailed examination of the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* was a 10-page letter to

the Priesthood of Set III° + on September 6, 1975. This was eventually followed by a 22-page one

the following year and a 26-page one in 1985. That was included for a time in the *Crystal Tablet*

15 Crowley, Aleister, *Magick* (Part I, 1911) (NY: Samuel Weiser, 1973), page #9.

of Set (the Setian I°/introductory volume of the *Jeweled Tablets of Set*), and later was moved to

the Adept II° + *Ruby Tablet.* Appendix #3 of this book marks its first [and possibly final, at least

by me] revision since then.

As mentioned at the beginning of Chapter #1, the Church of Satan had struggled for the

entire decade of its existence with the central, inevitable issue of the reality of the supernatural,

or more precisely the metaphysical. The puerile myths and images of the world's conventional

religions we had long since dismissed as worthless nonsense - indeed, as pertaining to their

devils and demons, the stuff for amusing, spooky psychodrama, sarcastic lampoon, and

occasionally Lesser Black Magical control of gullible minds still psychologically enslaved to

superstition.

Yet within carefully-crafted magical ritual environments, some Satanists had also sensed a

reality beyond that apparent to the ordinary senses. This was an entirely new and positive form

of "Satanism" that had almost nothing in common with traditional "Devil worship" except the

preliminary seriousness of formal atmospheres. It was a chill that went up one's spine when

commencing, then culminating a Black Magical working. We were not just play-acting; we had

really opened, or at least begun to open a door which profane humanity had only vaguely

imagined to exist. What we would see when we got it fully open we

did not know; we only sensed

that, for all of its faults and failings, the Church of Satan had somehow managed to discover its

key.

For me, the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* was the event that flung that door wide open. I

now knew of a certainty that there was a reality beyond the four-dimensional, and that within it

existed the actual centers of consciousness which mankind had dimly imagined as “gods”.

Pythagoras and Plato had come closer to them as Forms or Principles, and the ancient Egyptians

closest of all as *neteru.*

This realization forever transformed the core of my own consciousness, of course, as I’m sure

it would that of anyone else undergoing the same shock. I knew now that physical extension in

time/space was merely part of a much greater whole whose Mysteries awaited beyond.

I simultaneously realized that, as Crowley had observed in *Book 4* above, such an

illumination - there is no better word for it - cannot possibly be described or explained to

intellects as yet within the purely-material realm of consciousness. It would be futile, even

dangerous to try, as in H.G. Wells’ famous parable of *The Country of the Blind.*

There was, however, another aspect of the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* which **was** both

communicable and practical. It pointed the way to a unique path of self-realization and

ennoblement that any suitably-intelligent individual could decide to pursue. It was not necessary

to comprehend its origin or ultimate implication - just its existence and availability. The Grail

was now there to be grasped and drunk from, for any with the awareness, courage, and resolve to

do so.

And so it has been these thirty years hence. Many thousands of humans have undertaken the

adventure invited by the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* - some with more success than others,

but all, I think, awakened and energized by their encounter.

There is, unfortunately, a less-pleasant side to this phenomenon. Some aspirants have found

themselves unprepared to step beyond a purely-conventional frame of intellectual existence. In

such cases the strengthening of consciousness can evoke, as in the science-fiction film *Forbidden*

Planet, "monsters of the *id*" capable of psychological harm to themselves or others. As it has

learned more about such dangers over the years, the Temple of Set has endeavored to dissuade

such personalities from seeking initiation, or shortstopping an effort that seems to be

miscarrying in ominous directions. I daresay this will remain one of the Temple's more

important and compassionate responsibilities as long as it exists.

The Book of Coming Forth by Night was so meaningful to me that I have since ordered my

life and philosophy by its principles. The other founders of the Temple of Set accorded it a

similar trust and respect. Even though they had not participated in the working itself, many

remarked, they felt that the text itself carried its own aura of authenticity and conviction. In the

years that followed, countless others have been moved by it in a similar fashion.

When I accepted the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, it was in a deliberate, reflective way -

with a resolve to undertake the creation and care of the Temple of Set proper, and to patiently

allow history to validate or disprove any principles that the Temple might propose or practice.

This has remained my attitude ever since that serene and sublime experience.

As for the text itself, I am content to comment upon it as best I can, then let others judge it as

they will. For me it is now, as then, a simple, beautiful, and purposeful statement from the

sentient being whom mankind has loved, hated, worshipped, cursed, praised, and reviled as the

Prince of Darkness. To echo the words of G.B. Shaw in *The Devil's Disciple*: "I promised him my

soul, and swore an oath that I would stand up for him in this world and stand by him in the

next."

3: Khemistry

Confronting Ancient Egypt

The *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, among other things, retired the iconography of Judæo/

Christianity in favor of that of ancient Egypt. This resolved the Church of Satan's perennial

problem of being cast by others, if increasingly not casting itself, into an image of "anti-J/

C" [and presumably the "good" values J/C claims to represent].

A focus upon ancient Egyptian philosophy, religion, and culture, however, presented the

fledgling Temple of Set with a different, and equally formidable array of problems.

The topic of ancient Egypt generally has been one of both exhaustive examination by and

contentious debate between conventional Egyptologists and

independent investigators.

The former group generally agree that Egypt was simply an agricultural society comparable

to that of other Mediterranean/Near-Eastern cultures of the time-period. It was notable for its

enigmatic hieroglyphic writing system, odd-looking formalized art, peculiar massive building

projects, and morbid, animal-totem religious cultism.

The latter group, while differing in the details, see Egypt rather as a remarkable, indeed

startling exception to its primitive neighbors. It was uniquely a civilization and repository of

great sophistication and wisdom - in some respects so much so, indeed, that the very ability of

the Egyptians themselves to have generated such utopian wonders is called into question in favor

of Atlanteans, extraterrestrial visitors, and/or incarnated gods.

Each camp routinely ridicules the other. The conventionalists denounce the independents as

unscientific dreamers and “pyramidiots”. The latter are equally contemptuous of the former,

considering them as merely a brittle academic self-protectorate afraid to violate modern taboos.

And there are two taboos in particular which institutional academia does not dare to

transgress - or even openly acknowledge **as** taboos.

First, modern [Western] civilization is assumed to be at the zenith of human sophistication in

all respects. It has been steadily improving over the last five thousand years (after recorded

history officially began ca. 3000 BCE). Since the passage of time mandates social evolution and

improvement, it is heresy to suggest that an ancient civilization, particularly one at the very

beginning of this progression, could actually have been superior to its successors, including

those today, in some if not all respects.

Secondly, the world today is divided into three major monotheistic religions: Judaism,

Christianity, and Islam. All, even in countries where they have become largely propaganda

devices for the control of the lesser-intelligent masses, are as exclusive and intolerant as

politically permitted. Despite their doctrinal differences, however, they are all agreed that there

exists but **one** God - the Hebraic JHVH. Thus all polytheism, whether new or old, is false and

fictitious. It follows that any such fiction cannot possibly be as, much less more sophisticated

than Hebraic monotheism [as triple-modified]. Egyptian religion may be studied, exploited for

artistic purposes and horror movies, but **never** actually believed in.

The Church of Satan had been accused by its critics of championing the worship of evil. Not

so: What it actually did, as exemplified in the *Diabolicon*, was to maintain that “God” was in fact

evil and “Satan”, as a repudiation of that evil, was truly good. This was a new interpretation of

“evil” as human denial of personal responsibility for moral decisions, as well as hypocrisy in the

executing of such moral decisions as were ventured. True goodness was accordingly to be found

in genuine personal responsibility and full acceptance of the consequences of one's decisions.

This is what made the Church of Satan, despite its bizarre facade, feel so refreshingly virtuous

next to the repulsive, corrupt Hebraic monotheism it rejected.

Now the Temple of Set was challenged to take one step beyond. The **entire** Hebraic

monotheism, to include even its Satanic reinterpretation as the actual benchmark for evil, would

be thrown into the dustbin. JHVH, Satan, Moses, Christ, Mohammed - collectively discarded in

all of their social, physical, or metaphysical contexts and pretensions.

In their stead would arise not a mere revival of polytheism *per se*, but a polyfaceted divine

individualism, in which the energy of each such personal consciousness is realized to derive from

a Universal inspiration: Set.

This was a Set far more subtle and complex than the superficial character described by the

Egyptologists. Just how much so it would take the Temple of Set many years to discover; in

many regards it is still doing so.

The other Egyptian "gods" were also reperceived. In conventional Egyptology they too, like

Set, were merely two-dimensional dolls in a hodgepodge of folk tales and parables. Now the

individual human consciousness, each as energized by Set, was seen to be capable of seeing past

the physical surface of natural phenomena, into the living essence underlying each. These are the

Forms described by Plato in his *Dialogues*, and more originally the true *neteru* comprehended

by the priesthoods of ancient Egypt.

To the extent it has been noticed by conventional society over the years since its [re]founding,

the Temple of Set has occasionally been maligned and attacked on various alarmist pretexts:

“Satanism”, “cult”, “political extremism”, “mind control”, etc. All such nonsense serves merely to

illustrate how ignorant such critics are of the actual distinction and significance of the Temple as

summarized here. It is nothing less than an entirely new way of looking not just at self-conscious

humanity, but at the physical and metaphysical realities beyond that humanity,

Egyptian History

Let us now review those aspects of ancient Egypt on which most scholars, the academic and

the arcane, might be expected to find some common ground.

The earliest existing evidence of human culture in the Nile valley dates to more than 250,000

BCE, as the remnants of hand axes and other stone tools have been uncovered 50-100’ below the

Nile’s silt terrace.

Sometime between 10,000 and 7,000 BCE, according to conventional archæology, a most

important event took place - the domestication of the wild African goat and the subsequent

freedom to begin cultivation of grain. This effectively heralded the beginning of human

civilization, as for the first time primitive man was free to turn his thoughts to matters other

than a constant search for food.

By the same consensus, it was in the pre-dynastic Gerzean period (commencing about 3600

BCE) that the first communities of the future Egyptian nation came into existence. A great war of

unification commenced in approximately 3400 BCE. After more than two centuries of

intermittent conflict between Upper and Lower Egypt, the land was finally united under Menes

(or Narmer), the first pharaoh of the I Dynasty. 16

Inhabiting a land characterized by the regularity of the elements (behavior of the winds, the

Nile, the climate, the Sun, and the skies), the Egyptians sought perfection in stability, harmony,

symmetry, geometry, and a cyclical [as opposed to progressive or linear] concept of time.

In modern culture we take progressive/linear time for granted. It is as inevitable and

inexorable as the hands of the wristwatches to which we are gently, yet firmly manacled. We see

our lives, and indeed the entire known universe, as a terrible struggle against entropy, ending

ultimately in the death, decomposition, and obliteration of each separate person or thing.

It is further this perception, and the fear of it, which has lent Hebraic monotheism a vampiric

persistence far past the 17th-18th Century “Enlightenment” which, intellectually at least, exposed

it as a sham. For the Christian and Muslim versions, if not the Jewish, promise continuation of

the same life after physical death, albeit with dire punishment specifically for not believing in

and obeying them now.

The Egyptians, however, envisioned neither themselves nor the world about them to be

entrapped in such a fearsome forced-march. They saw the Sun, Moon, and firmament behaving

in recurring cycles, as also the rise and fall of the Nile, the regular seasons, plant life. If humans

and other animals were born, lived for a time, and died, it stood to reason that they too

participated in an eternal cycling of a more subtle color. Egyptian records would accordingly

document specific personalities and events, but without any particular attention to related

change or innovation. Harmony with the cycles of things, not defiance of them, was the Egyptian

ideal - which explains why the essential character of Egyptian society remained little changed,

except to meet external intrusion, for thirty dynasties extending over 3,000 years. 17

Former Director of Cairo’s French Oriental Archæological Institute Serge Sauneron

comments:

To understand the attitude of the Egyptians, it is necessary to emphasize the striking contrast

between their view of the world and ours. We live in a universe which

we know is in perpetual

movement; each new problem demands a new solution. But for the Egyptians this notion of time

which modifies the current knowledge of the world, of an alteration of factors which forces a

change in methods, had no place. In the beginning the divinity created a stable world, fixed,

definitive; this world functions as a motor well oiled and well fed. If there are “misfires” - if the

motor fades, if one of the parts making it up is worn out or broken - it is replaced and everything

starts off again better than before. But this motor would always remain the same; its mechanism,

its appearance, its output would always be identical.

If some problem intrigues the mind, therefore - if some serious event arises to disturb the

customary order of things - it could not really be new; it was foreseen with the world. Its solution

or remedy exists in all eternity, revealed in a kind of universal “manner of use” that the gods

defined in creating the universe itself. What is necessary, therefore, is to find in the ancient

writings the formula that foresaw such-and-such a case. Before a given event - a physical

phenomenon, a catastrophe striking the whole country - the scholar would not seek to discover the

actual causes in order to find an appropriate remedy. Rather he would examine with scholarly

ardor the volumes of old writings to find out if the event had already occurred in some moment of

the past, and what solution had then been applied to it. 18

16 Fairservis, Walter A. Jr., *The Ancient Kingdoms of the Nile*. New York: New American Library/Mentor #MY-843,

1962, Chapters #1-2.

17 The XXX Dynasty is generally considered to be the last native Egyptian one. Subsequently there was a Persian one

(XXXI) and a Ptolemaic Greek one (XXXII), ending with the death of Cleopatra VII and Roman rule in 30 BCE.

18 Sauneron, Serge, *Les pretres de l'ancienne Egypte*. New York: Grove Press, 1980, pages #118-119.

In accordance with their cyclical perception of reality, therefore, the Egyptians' achievements

tended to be in "timeless" areas such as astronomy, mathematics, medicine, and architecture.

These, along with Egyptian religion and art, are often oversimplified in many modern

treatments, due in part to the absence of verifiable data in later history until the deciphering of

hieroglyphics by Champollion in 1822. Because of the destruction and despoliation of ancient

Egyptian records and works of art by religious fanatics of later eras, it is estimated that modern

archæologists have at their disposal less than 10% of that country's cultural creations from which

to reconstruct its values. 19

Egypt was divided into 42 nomes (provinces), each dominated by the priesthood of one or

more *neteru*. A particular priesthood might also influence more than one nome. The monarchy

was closely controlled by the various orders of priesthood, with the pharaoh acting as an Earthly

deputy of and interpreter for the *neteru*.

Governmental, judicial, and political systems were responsible for their ethics to the *neteru*,

not to the people. Justice was meted out by viziers (internal roving ambassadors of the pharaoh)

and nome governors according to the *neter* of justice, Maat, on an individual-case basis. There

was no concept of individual rights against the government, because government was viewed as

a system imposed from without by the *neteru*. Similarly each Egyptian, whether high- or

lowborn, participated in this system. Crime and corruption were of course possible, but

inadvisable because of the conviction that viciousness, callousness, or cruelty would be punished

severely after Earthly death. 20 [It is of note that such posthumous judgment focused upon

individual virtue/vice rather than, as in later Christian/Islamic doctrine, upon mere orthodoxy

and obedience to religious institutions.]

Old Kingdom Egypt was largely insulated from foreign invasion or conflict, hence Egypt

spent its early years as a peaceful culture with no standing military. Egypt is credited with

invention of the alphabet, as well as the use of currency as a medium of exchange. It is

noteworthy for having produced the first national (as opposed to city-state) political system, as

well as the most enduring one in recorded history (more than 3,000 years). There was no caste,

racial, or sexual discrimination; foreigners were considered “less than

human (=Egyptian)", but

could remedy this misfortune simply by moving to Egypt and adopting Egyptian culture.

Egypt was ultimately destroyed by foreign conquerors (Persia, Macedonia, Rome) and by her

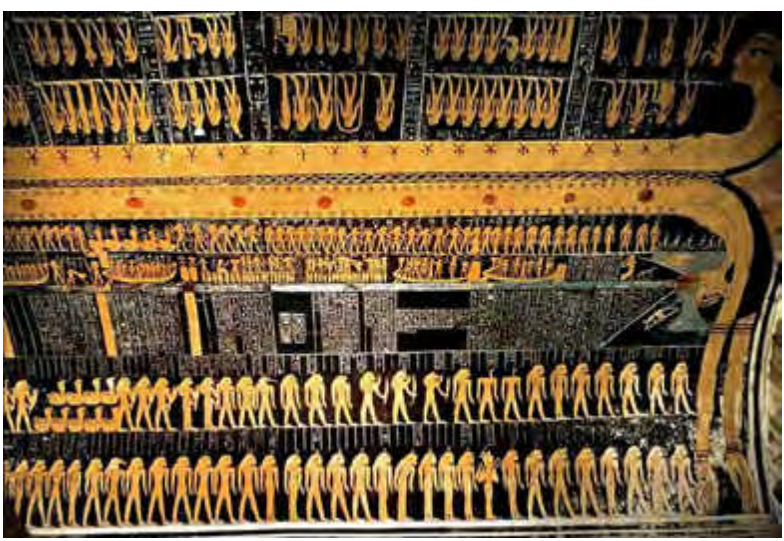
inability to adapt to the continuing competition of foreign cultures. Her New Empire of the

Setian (XIX-XX) Dynasties was a protectionist backlash rather than an effort to "civilize" or

create a permanent empire [after the fashion of Persia, Macedonia, or Rome].

19 Cf. Fagan, Brian M., *The Rape of the Nile*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975.

20 Wilson, John A., "Egypt" in Frankfort, Henri (Ed.), *Before Philosophy*. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1946.



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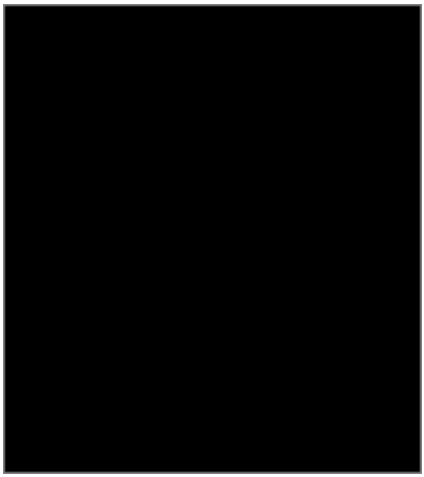


The *Neteru*

The Egyptians perceived the Universe as actively controlled by conscious, natural principles

(*neteru*) of which Sir E.A. Wallis Budge remarks:

The word *neter* has been translated “godlike”, “holy”, “divine”, “sacred”, “power”, “strength”,

“force”, “strong”, “fortify”, “mighty”, “protect”; but it is quite impossible to be certain that any

word which we may use represents the meaning of *neter*, because no one knows exactly what idea

the ancient Egyptians attached to the word. The truth is that the exact meaning of *neter* was lost at

a very early period of Egyptian history, and even the Coptic does not help us to recover it. 21

To the Egyptians, all of “nature” (derived from *neter*) was alive and the direct consequence of

the wills of the *neteru*. Nature was intelligible not just through inanimate, automatic, general

regularities which could be discovered via the “scientific method”; but also through

connections and associations between things and events perceived in the human

mind. There was no distinction between “reality” and “appearance”; anything capable of

exerting an effect upon the mind thereby existed. Hence a dream could be considered just as

“real” and thus significant as a daytime experience. No more eloquently has this been

summarized than by She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed in H. Rider Haggard’s *She and Allan*:

[Allan Quatermain] “I have heard of Isis of

the Egyptians, Lady of the Moon, Mother of

Mysteries, spouse of Osiris whose child was

Horus the Avenger.”

[Ayesha] “Aye, and I think will hear more

of her before you have done, Allan, for now

something comes back to me concerning you

and her and another. I am not the only one who

has broken the oaths of Isis and received her

curse, Allan, as **you** may find out in the days to

come. But what of these heavenly queens?”

“Only this, Ayesha: I have been taught that

they were but phantasms fabled by men with

many another false divinity, and could have

sworn that this was true. And yet you talk of

them as real and living, which perplexes me.”

“Being dull of understanding doubtless it

perplexes you, Allan. Yet if you had imagination,

you might understand that these goddesses are

great **principles of nature**: Isis of throned

21 Budge, E. A. Wallis, *The Book of the Dead*. New Hyde Park: University Books, 1960, page #99.

Wisdom and strait virtue, and Aphrodite of Love as it is known to men and women who, being

human, have it laid upon them that they must hand on the torch of life in their little hour. Also you

would know that such principles can seem to take shape and form and at certain ages of he world

appear to their servants visible in majesty, though perchance today others with changed names

wield their sceptres and work their will. Now you are answered on this matter."

The Egyptian concept of "magic", correspondingly, was neither unusual or exceptional. It

merely represented the setting in motion of appropriate *neteru* forces to accomplish a desired

end: which could be through physical action, symbolic ritual, art, or speech (*heka*). A magical

operation thus initially required perception (*sia*) of a necessity, followed by utterance of the *heka*

(*hw*) to address it.

Egyptian art, literature, and science looked for beauty and symmetry (felt to be indications of

divine perfection), rather than for cause-and-effect relationships. Hence Egyptian thought is

sometimes called "geometric" as opposed to the "algebraic" thought of

Hellenic and later

logicians.

Since impressions and appearances substantiated reality, the Egyptian emphasis on portraits

and statues of the *neteru* was not merely decorative, metaphorical, or symbolic. Rather an image

was a medium whereby the *neter* in question could make an actual appearance in the material

world. 22

Similarly part of something could substitute for the whole as long as the mind completed the

connection. Mental imagery created by viewing the portrait of a dead relative, for example,

brought that relative to true life.

Persons unfamiliar with the ancient Egyptian culture often assume that the Egyptian

religion, like those of later Mediterranean civilizations, consisted of a single, integrated pantheon

of anthropomorphic gods and goddesses. It is rather the case that the earliest Egyptian *neteru*

were provincial, being patrons of individual cities and districts (nomes). Nor, despite their

famous human/beast composite appearances, were they mere "supernatural persons" in the later

Greek, Mesopotamian, or Roman mold. While popular stories were woven about them -

presumably for popular consumption - the hieroglyphic treatment of the Egyptian *neteru*

suggests that they actually represented various aspects of existence - the "Forms" or "First

Principles" discussed by Pythagoras and Plato in a more abstract manner. 23

Intriguingly the *neteru* may have had a physical presence as well. The 30-Dynasty dating

system most archæologists use for ancient Egypt comes from Manetho, an Egyptian priest at

Sebennytos in the Nile Delta ca. 280 BCE. Manetho's dynastic list extends backward before

Menes and the I Dynasty date of 3100 BCE: 350 years Thinites; 1,790 years other Memphite

kings; 1,817 years other kings; 1,255 years "Heroes"; and before that 13,900 years in which the

neteru reigned physically on Earth.

Obviously this chronology would conflict with the "accepted" prehistory of Egypt as

summarized at the beginning of this chapter. Conventional Egyptologists are comfortable only

with a "civilization began suddenly in 3100 BCE" scenario, hence Manetho is relied upon very

strongly **after** that date, but swept under the rug **prior** to it. 24

22 Cf. Schaefer, Heinrich, *Principles of Egyptian Art*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974. Contrast Egyptian statuary

with Greek, Roman, or later European. The "living presence" in the former will be dramatically evident.

23 Cf. Winspear, Alban D., *The Genesis of Plato's Thought.* New York: S.A. Russell, 1940. Also Cf. Aquino, M.A., "The

Sphinx and the Chimæra" (Appendix #1).

24 Hoffman, Michael A., *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979. Fix, Wm. R., *Pyramid*

Odyssey. New York: Mayflower Books, 1978.

Commerce, protective alliances, cultural contact, and finally the unification of the entire

nation ca. 3100 BCE resulted in the gradual incorporation of local *neteru* into regional groups,

and then into a loosely-knit national pantheon. Local and regional cult centers continued to hold

their respective patrons in especial regard, however, and so the character and role of a specific

neter might vary remarkably from place to place. Individual dynasties

also tended to be oriented

to particular cult centers, and so the *neteru* in question would be elevated - at least for a time - to

the status of national patrons. 25

The information concerning these cults which is available to modern Egyptologists is both

sparse and confusing. Since a given *neter* could be portrayed in a number of different ways,

identifying the “core *neter*” is difficult. The images and inscriptions concerning a *neter* were

often altered or appropriated by cultists of rival *neteru*. In Christian and Islamic times all “old

gods” were considered blasphemous, and monuments to them were regularly defaced and

destroyed. By the end of the fifth century CE, knowledge of hieroglyphics had died out, not to

reappear until the nineteenth century; meanwhile many “useless” records perished through

neglect.

For two reasons the cult of Osiris (*Asar*) and Isis (*Asa*) has been emphasized in modern

literature: First, it was the last cult to dominate the entire Egyptian nation. Thus it was in a

position to do a “final editing” of non-Osirian manuscripts and monuments. Secondly it was

described in detail by Plutarch, permitting its study long after the hieroglyphic records of the

other cults had become unreadable. 26

Set

No records of the ancient Priesthood of Set survived first the Osirian-

dynastic persecution

and later the more general vandalism of the Christian/Islamic eras. We know of it only by its

reflection, both in the character of Set as he was portrayed symbolically and mythologically and

in the nature of Egyptian priesthoods in general. Three significant facts are known about the

Priesthood of Set:

(1) Together with the Priesthood of Horus [the Elder] , it was the oldest of the

Egyptian priesthoods. If we date it to the earliest predynastic images of Set found by

archæologists, we can establish an origin of at least 3200 BCE. Working with the Egyptians' own

25 Ions, Veronica, *Egyptian Mythology*. New York: Hamlyn Publishing Group, 1968, pages #11-13.

26 Budge, *Egyptian Language.* New York: Dover Publications, 1971, page #15. Ions, *op.cit.* , pages #50-55. Fagan,

op.cit. , pages #34-36. Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris*, Volume V in *Moralia* (14 volumes), F.C. Babbitt (Ed. & Trans.).

London: Loeb Classical Library, 1936.

astronomically-based records, we may approximate 5000 BCE. 27 If we are to assume the final

eclipse of the Priesthood at the end of the XIX-XX [Setian] Dynasties ca. 1085 BCE, we are

looking at an institution which existed at least two thousand and possibly as many as four

thousand years. "In the early dynasties," observes Budge:

Set was a beneficent god, and one whose favor was sought after by the

living and by the dead,

and so late as the XIX Dynasty kings delighted to call themselves "Beloved of Set". After the cult of

Osiris was firmly established and this god was the "great god" of all Egypt, it became the fashion to

regard Set as the origin of all evil, and his statues and images were so effectively destroyed that

only a few which have escaped by accident have come down to us. 28

One may note that Set was by no means the only "fabulous" creature ever portrayed by

Egyptian artists. But he was the only one represented as a principal *neter*, as opposed to a

purely-animalistic monster of the *Tuat*.

(2) Set was the *neter* who was "different" from all of the others. Too often this is

simplified into his being the "evil" slayer of Osiris, hence the personification of "evil"; yet any but

the most cursory study of Egyptian religious symbolism is sufficient to dispel this caricature. He

was rather a *neter* "against the *neteru*": the entity who symbolized that which is **not** of nature.

This is a very curious role for a *neter* in Egyptian cosmology: to be a presence and force

which alone could not be apprehended by perceptions of the natural senses. Set thus represents

the nameless "thing" whose existence we know of by the shadow it casts on things apprehended

and things perceived by it: the non-natural "presence of self" in individual intelligent life.

We have generalized the vehicle by which this presence is manifest as the *ba*, spirit, *psyche*,

or soul, but increased precision is possible. We must subtract from the *psyche* what is “life

force”, and focus our attention on that which remains: **the very awareness of self**. In doing so

we have in one sense retraced the path of Descartes to the *cogito ergo sum* proposition. Unlike

Descartes, however, we see this phenomenon to be a “thing **totally** apart” which is not an

extension of “God” or anything else. Set is the conceptualizer of this principle: the designer. To

rewrite the crucial sentence in the above quote from the point of view of a *neter*: “A thing created

in the mind thereby exists.”

This is delicate ground to tread, so much more so for an ancient Egyptian civilization whose

entire “natural” cosmology was based upon the perfection and harmony of the Universe.

(3) Despite this unique and disturbing image, or perhaps because of it, Set

became the patron of the two most powerful dynasties in Egypt’s long history, the

XIX and XX. Herein there is an interesting “theological succession”:

The early XVIII Dynasty (ca. 1580-1372) was that of the great Amenhoteps, during whose

reigns the Priesthood of Amon at Thebes was preeminent. The dynasty disintegrated during the

“Amarna period” (ca. 1372-1343) of Akhenaten, during which the solar disk of Aton was

considered supreme if not indeed all-inclusive of the *neteru*. When the new XIX Dynasty arose

under Rameses I and Seti I, the state role of Amon was restored - but

the pharaohs directed

much of their efforts towards Set. Recounts Sauneron:

The new dynasty in power, careful to appear to be “restoring everything to order”, had many

reasons for mistrusting the Amonian priesthood. Descendants of a military family of the eastern

delta, the new pharaohs were traditionally devoted to a god little esteemed by the masses because

27 Lockyer, J. Norman, *The Dawn of Astronomy*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1964, page #215.

28 Budge, *The Book of the Dead*, page #181.

of the role that he had been assigned in the death of Osiris. But they preserved nevertheless, here

and there, the temples and priesthoods of the god Set.

The Amarnian experience had demonstrated the cost of too abrupt a break with the beliefs

central to the entire nation, and of entering into open warfare against a priesthood practically as

powerful as the throne itself. Thus the politics of Seti I (1312-1301) and of Rameses II (1301-1235)

were infinitely more subtle than those of their predecessors. There was no rupture with Thebes;

the constructions continued, and magnificent edifices were raised to the glory of Amon at Karnak,

Gourna, and Ramesseum. But it was from the [Osirian] center of Abydos that Rameses appointed

the High Priest of Amon. Then he installed two of his sons, Merytum and Khamuast, as the High

Priests of Ra at Heliopolis and Ptah at Memphis, and demonstrated by

further monuments and

political favors his public support of these gods. But finally, wearied of Thebes and its ambitious

priests, he departed to build a new capital, Pi-Rameses, in the eastern delta - where he could

quietly worship the god dearest to him, with Amon occupying a secondary prominence.

The provincial cities where Set had been worshipped from all eternity - among them Ombos,

Tjebu, and Sepermeru - gained new preeminence from the favor accorded by the Ramesside

leaders to the god of the Eastern Delta. Above all, Pi-Rameses, the new capital, brilliantly restored

the worship that Set had formerly received in the Avaris of the Hyksos. 29

During the Setian Dynasties - most probably during the reign of Merenptah - the revolt and

"exodus" of a number of nomads (hieroglyphic *habiru*) living in Egypt's Goshen province

occurred - or at least did so in Jewish legend. Although "Old Testament" lore states that the

original Hebrews were a unified, foreign culture which entered Egypt during the time of

Rameses I, there are no Egyptian records substantiating this. It is more probable that the actual

participants in any "exodus" were people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. 30 Possibly the

Hebrews' hated "Satan" derives from one of the honorific titles (*Set-hen* = Eternal Set) accorded

the state deity of the regime they were fleeing.

Following the passing of the two Setian dynasties, the increasing

influence of a priesthood

not courted by the Ramesside pharaohs - that of Osiris - boded ill for the Priesthood of Set. The

Osirians recast Set as Osiris' treacherous brother and mortal enemy of Osiris' son - for whom

they appropriated the *neter* Horus. Not content with attacking Set personally, they further

appropriated his consort and son from the original triad of his cult - Nepthys and Anubis - whom

they now described respectively as a concubine of Osiris and a son of Osiris by Nepthys.

Comments E.A. Wallis Budge:

Between the XXII and the XXV Dynasties, a violent reaction set in against this god [Set]; his

statues and figures were smashed; his effigy was hammered out from the bas-reliefs and stelæ in

which it appeared. 31

29 *Ibid.*, pages #183-184.

30 Romer, John, *Testament*. New York: Henry Holt, 1988, page #58: "Hard evidence of the Exodus event in the

preserving deserts of the Sinai, where most of the biblical Wandering takes place, is similarly elusive. Although its

climate has preserved the tiniest traces of ancient bedouin encampments and the sparse, 5,000-year-old villages of

mine-workers, there is not a single trace of Moses or the Israelites. And they would have been by far the largest body

of ancient people ever to have lived in this great wilderness. Neither is there any evidence that Sinai and its little

natural springs could ever have supported such a multitude, even for a single week. Several 19th-century vicars

recognized this fact within a day or two of the start of numerous expeditions in search of Moses' footsteps. "Escaping

from the rigours of an English winter," as one of them says, "in a land of the flock and the tent to which our only

guide was the *Bible*" they quickly realized that the biblical Exodus was logistically impossible and that the *Bible* was

a most ambiguous guide to that desolate region. The biblical description of the Exodus, then, flies in the face of

practical experience. Indeed the closer you examine it, the further it seems removed from all of ancient history."

31 Budge, *The Mummy*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1973, page #276.

Various reasons for this reaction have been proposed by Egyptologists. It is been suggested

that Set fell into disrepute through being associated in the popular mind with the *Sutekh* of the

invading Hyksos. Possible, but improbable, as the Hyksos invasion occurred prior to the XIX-XX

Dynasties when Set was preeminently in favor - and the presiding *neter* over Egypt's greatest

period of imperial glory.

Set's eclipse may well have been due to a more subtle, yet pervasive sentiment sweeping

Egypt. As Sauneron and many other Egyptologists have acknowledged, Egyptian philosophy was

based upon a millennia-old conviction of the absolute presence and influence of the *neteru*, and

in the virtue of a social system in which the preservation of cyclical harmony was all-important.

While the New Empire of the XIX-XX Dynasties extended Egypt's

influence to Palestine and

Mesopotamia, it also made the Egyptians aware that there were many other functioning cultures

in which the *neteru* were unknown [at least by their Egyptian names]. Moreover the concept of

Egypt as just one among a number of nation-states competing for power and influence in the

Mediterranean, rather than as the one civilization at the center of existence, must have been a

most unsettling one to this ancient culture - which previously had been able to discount its

neighbors as mere uncultured, barbarian tribes.

Egypt's solution to this problem was to turn gradually away from a glorification of this life

and towards an orientation on the afterlife, where such disturbing dilemmas could be assumed

not to exist. This would explain the growing influence and popularity of the Osiris cult during the

post-XX Dynasty Egyptian decadence, as Osiris was a *neter* of the afterlife.

As the Osiris cult portrayed Set as Osiris' nemesis rather than an independent and

preexisting *neter* with no particular interest in Osiris, this would also explain the simultaneous

wave of Setian persecution described by Budge. It was characteristic of ancient Egypt that each

new dynasty, in an attempt to establish its own "timelessness", often doctored monuments and

records to eliminate inconvenient inconsistencies. Presumably the Osirian dynasties followed

suit, defacing or rewriting all references to Set that did not support

their portrayal of him as a

"Devil". 32 And that was the distortion of Set which survived in later Mediterranean legend -

principally through Plutarch, who described it in some detail in his *Moralia*. 33

Commencing in 1975, therefore, the Temple of Set sought to return to an original,

undistorted apprehension of Set. In keeping with our modern levels of knowledge, of course, this

image has been both enhanced and refined. Enhanced in that we now understand better than the

ancient Egyptians how the material universe functions, refined to exclude facets of the human

personality that are natural, externally-controlled functions.

At the same time, contemporary civilization's impatience and superficiality - its restless

inability to study anything metaphysical in any depth - have tended to condense the delicate,

complex study of Egyptian cosmology into a crude caricature capable of being digested by

modern minds in a few hours at most. Initiates of the Temple of Set must resolve to take the time

to apprehend and appreciate Set - and the other Egyptian *neteru* - in the same contemplative,

reflective, and above all unhurried fashion that their ancient predecessors did. Only then will the

magnificence, subtlety, and depth of this metaphysical system be realized and appreciated. Only

then can its principles be applied meaningfully within our current environment.

In the first few years of the young Temple of Set, we weren't quite so

clear about this. We duly

plunged into many works of conventional Egyptology, some of the more useful of which are still

included in the Egypt/Historical and Egypt/Philosophical categories of our Reading List.

Various Setians contributed some research articles of this genre to the *Scroll*, *Ruby Tablet*, and

32 Ions, *op.cit.* , pages #72-78. The Osirian legends on this subject are treated comprehensively in J. Gwyn Griffith's

The Conflict of Horus and Seth (Chicago: Argonaut Publishers, 1969).

33 Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris*, Volume V in *Moralia.*

Order & Element publications. But it soon became clear to us that, absent an **empathy** for Egypt

- a sensation of its innate soul, as it were - all such studies were sterile and lifeless exercises.

The greatest breakthrough for us came in our encounter with the writings of René Schwaller

de Lubicz and his wife Isha. Indeed the lion's - I should say lioness' - share of the credit goes to

her, because much of René's work is highly technical. Isha was able to synthesize its elemental

themes into her highly-readable "novel" *Her-Bak*, being the story of a young Egyptian's journey

from ordinary peasant to initiated priest. 34 For many Setians, once they were exposed to the

basic structure of René's thought through *Her-Bak*, his more complex works were soon

unlocked.

And suddenly ancient Egypt came wonderfully, vibrantly to life before

us. Now, knowing

what to look for and what to do with it once we found it, the Temple of Set discovered no end of

wonders over the years, as of course we continue to do today.

René's initial realization came from his study of hieroglyphs: that in addition to their

convenience for mere alphabetics, they embodied symbolic principles apprehensible to both the

rational and the suprarational intelligence. [His methodology is thus often termed

"Symbolism".] Gradually he extended his awareness of this key to Egyptian culture into its

architecture (as in his *magnum opus* examination of the Luxor temple complex, *Le Temple de*

L'Homme) and pre-Pythagoreanism.

Of the various works examining René's ideas in the Temple's Reading List, I think I would

recommend John Anthony West's *Serpent in the Sky* as the most "immediately-intelligible"

introduction. 35 It is at least better-suited to the impatient modern reader than the *Her-Bak* we

earliest Setians strolled patiently, if pleasantly through!

Another very capable presentation is *Egyptian Mysteries* by Lucie Lamy, René's longtime

student and the talented illustrator for both his works and Isha's. 36

Beyond these two introductory works [and of course *Her-Bak* if you have a peaceful

disposition and plenty of contemplation-time], I need say nothing. Once the door opens for you,

you will see, well, "wonderful things"! You will suddenly understand

the temples as media for

living, active interaction with the *neteru*. 37

And of course you will meet those *neteru*. Not the two-dimensional, comic-book simpletons

cherished by profane Egyptologists, enmeshed in tawdry tales of sex, violence, and meaningless

ritual. But the beautiful, wonderful weavers of the most delicate webs of the Objective Universe

itself. In their presence, severally and collectively, the awakened Initiate will confront an eternity

of discovery and synthetic creativity.

And yet the most difficult *neter* to meet is Set. Because to apprehend all of the others one

need only look **outward**, through the lenses you have learned to fashion for your enlightened

vision.

But where are you going to place your lever, direct your lens, focus your attention, to see **into**

the nucleus, the central fire, of the thing that is your own conscious self?

34 Schwaller de Lubicz, Isha, *Her-Bak. New York: Inner Traditions, 1954 (two volumes)*.

35 West, Anthony, *Serpent in the Sky: The High Wisdom of Ancient Egypt.* New York: Julian Press, Inc., 1987.

36 Lamy, Lucie, *Egyptian Mysteries.* New York: Crossroad, 1981.

37 But not necessarily the three Giza pyramids,whose construction is not only human-impossible but whose passages

and chambers are not human-proportioned or -functional. As devices of extreme isolation and sensory deprivation,

they are in effect “Faraday cages” to disrupt the electromagnetic

spectrum and keep the *neteru* out, not welcome

them in. Self-conscious entities venturing therein for any amount of time would be subject to severe deterioration

of coherence, triggering, if anything, subsoul manifestations not unlike *Forbidden Planet*'s *id*-monster. I see them

thus as singularly and conspicuously non-Egyptian [various later Egyptian imitations notwithstanding], though of

still-elusive origin and purpose.

For that is the mirror through which Set will gradually become more and more distinct, to

those with the intelligence, discipline, determination, and initiation to see him. And when and if

you achieve this, you will simultaneously - and necessarily - experience a wonder equally as

sublime: you will behold your own true, complete, ultimate divinity.

In the original *Stargate* motion picture, the Great Pyramid of Giza was revealed to be nothing

more than a crude, ritualistic imitation by fearful protodynastic Egyptians of the gigantic,

pyramidal starships in which creatures beyond their comprehension had come to Earth; the

stone coffer in the "King's Chamber" was a similar rough image of the wondrous machine in the

starships with the power to literally bring dead bodies back to life.

In that film, as well as the elegant television series it subsequently inspired, the alien "gods"

were not quite the *neteru* they pretended to be - simply an advanced species using "divine"

imagery as a means of psychological domination of others as well as

for their own exotic

pleasures. Nevertheless these *Goa'uld* almost uncannily demonstrated the relationship which

ordinary humanity has with its perceived "God/gods" - and why it is quite fulfilled by such a

relationship, false and oppressive as it may be.

In world after world, civilization after civilization, it is ever the same; and when a *Goa'uld* is

exposed or killed, the result is always chaos and uncertainty, with the "liberated" peoples

slipping down into aimless, tedious tribalism. The wanton terrors of the *Goa'uld* are gone - but

so are the great, gleaming Pyramidal starships, the technology to instantly heal all injuries and

even restore bodily life itself, and the ecstatic experience of interacting with the "gods" face-to-

face. It is now, again, the Fourth Age of Middle-earth.

Stargate leaves its audience with an even more tantalizing mystery. If the *Goa'uld* borrow

their *personæ* from **real** *neteru* whom they have used advanced technology to imitate, how did

they originally come to know them?

Which leads to my central question about the ancient Egyptians: Why didn't their culture

"develop"? I believe that the evidence shows that their arts, sciences, mathematics, technology,

techniques of warfare are all there complete from the beginning. What I want to argue here today

is that the Egyptians of the pre-Old Kingdom era somehow "inherited" all these arts and sciences.

Then after a short “getting acquainted” period, we see the full flowering of what we call ancient

Egypt ...

- Lecture, Daniel Jackson, Ph.D.

Scottish Rite Temple

4357 Wilshire Boulevard

Los Angeles, California,

December 1992

4: 22nd and Kansas

On the morning of June 22, 1975 I felt less like a magician and more like the victim of a

mugging. I had undertaken what I had anticipated as a Greater Black Magical working to place

the recent critical events in the Church of Satan in some sort of constructive-repair context.

Instead the entire structure had been discarded and its patron, Satan, remorphed into an ancient

Egyptian god. The previous six years of my initiatory life, from the time when I had joined the

Church, had in the space of a few hours become obsolete.

Named a Magus and charged to [re]build a Temple of Set, I considered that I knew nothing

about being a Magus, little about ancient Egypt generally, and less about Set in particular. Not to

mention that beyond the walls of my study, my initiatory colleagues from the Church of Satan

quite understandably still considered themselves Satanists and believed in the metaphysical

basis for, if no longer in the organizational ruins of the Church.

Well, I had to start somewhere. I telephoned Lilith Sinclair at her home in Summerland, a

wooded suburb of Santa Barbara, and asked if I could visit to show her the record of last night's

GBM working. She read through it silently, then somewhat to my surprise simply nodded her

assent. The *Book of Coming Forth by Night* had instantly struck her as authentic, beyond

necessity for explanation, substantiation, or argument. This was a phenomenon which, to my

fascination, was to accompany the document henceforth - not for every reader, but for those

who, as it turned out, were consciously or unconsciously looking for

the kind of initiatory “lens”

that the Temple of Set turned out to be.

The following day I made thirty photocopies of the text and sent them to the Priesthood and

Regional Agents of the Church. One of the first replies came from Warlock William Murray of

Winnemucca, Nevada:

What can I say about the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*? It is awesome. A Revelation. The

true Mandate of the Dark. Holy Hastur, did it clear up a lot for me! Believe it or not, I knew these

things - but, as has happened in the past, could not give voice to them, even in my own mind. 38

And that too proved to be a characteristic of the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* over the

years: that upon reading its statements, potential Setians did not consider them “new”, but

rather as truths which they had personally sensed, yet never quite given their own voice to

previously.

But generally the sentiment of recipients of the initial thirty copies was, as I had expected,

more one of “wait and see”. The recent shocks and surprises concerning the Church of Satan had

38 Letter, William Murray to M.A. Aquino, June 25, X/1975.

been unsettling enough; a purported revelation from a god would have to wait its emotional/

rational/critical turn.

I turned my attention to the structural and operational design of the new Temple of Set. In

this I realized I was very much on my own. Not only was I the most senior official of the Church -

the only one of the IV° + to have disavowed it - but none of the other Satanists who had also

resigned had any concept of or experience with organizational mechanics. Bringing the

membership into the Temple's functioning would be essential to its future viability and survival,

but that would have to happen later. I would need to do the initial work myself.

The Church of Satan had been a California for-profit corporation with Anton and Diane

LaVey as its sole members. Membership in the Church as a religious affiliation had not carried

with it corporate membership, even at the Priesthood level. Thus, when Anton decided to

corrupt the degree system in 1975, Church members had no legal interest or recourse. The

Church's for-profit status [as a "business"] had also kept it from qualifying for federal or state

tax-exempt status as a religious institution.

These I would remedy. The Temple of Set would not belong to myself, but collectively to the

Priesthood of Set (III° +) as members of its corporation. And that corporation would be a

California nonprofit corporation organized as a church. Federal and California State tax-exempt

status as a religion would be sought, establishing the Temple's [and all Setians'] full right to First

Amendment Constitutional recognition and protection.

Thematically I thought the Temple should continue/evolve from the Church, so that it would

include an initiatory degree system, a national [later international] office, and local groups. The

formal Priesthood was clearly to be continued, and the concept of a High Priesthood and a

Council of Nine seemed essential as well. Beyond these very general assumptions, the sheet of

paper was clean.

I had had the benefit of six years' supervisory work with the Church, and prior to that my

personal involvement with various nonprofit organizations such as the Knights of Dunamis

(Eagle Scout honor society of the Boy Scouts of America) and Alpha Phi Omega Fraternity. I had

been National Commander of the former in 1965 and the University of California, Santa Barbara

Chapter President of the latter in 1967. In both I had worked extensively on their internal design.

A Temple of Set presented several new and unusual challenges and requirements. As

indicated in the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, it was essential that it support initiation as a

uniquely **individual** experience. Thus it was to be an "organization for individuals", something

of a tension if not outright contradiction. [The ominous metaphor of "herding cats" came to

mind!]

The Church of Satan's initiatory degree system had worked well enough, particularly as it had

been regularly reworked and refined over the years. But by Temple of Set requirements it was

unacceptably vague, limited in scope, and symbolically obsolete. It had been loosely modeled on

the grade structure of Aleister Crowley's A.'.A.'., the predecessor most familiar to Anton LaVey. I

went back into the documents of the A.'.A.'. and its own predecessor, the Hermetic Order of the

Golden Dawn, to study the rationale behind those grade systems. While both were loosely linked

to the Hebrew Cabalistic "Tree of Life" then fashionable among European occult societies, I saw

threads extending from them through the Church of Satan that were indeed suitable to these

latest, most advanced requirements of the Temple of Set.

The Church had had two participant (Satanist I°, Witch/Warlock II°) and three Priesthood

(Priest/ess of Mendes III°, Magister IV°, Magus V°) degrees. The I° signified only formal

affiliation. The II° represented passage of a fairly simple written test based upon the contents of

the *Satanic Bible*. The III° and IV° were conferred by Anton LaVey, based in part on a more

extensive written/essay examination and in part on his personal evaluation of the individual.

The V° remained, as of 1975, a designation for Anton's own initiatory standing as distinct from

his High Priesthood office. The Magister IV° was subdivided into -Caverni IV°-I', -Templi IV°-II',

and -Magnus IV°-III', with the intent that they function

administratively similar to bishops,

archbishops, and cardinals once the Church eventually grew to require same. [A detailed

description of the Church's degree system, and its somewhat confusing dual names, can be found

in Appendix #39 of my *Church of Satan*.]

I rethought all of this comprehensively.

It did not seem to me that a person could properly claim to be an "initiate" simply by

expressing a desire to become one and paying an affiliation fee. The Temple of Set's I° must

identify formal affiliation and appreciate the individual's desire, yet stop short of representing

him as someone actually **initiated**. Per the guidance of the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, I

determined that the I° [as well as all affiliation generally] should be called "Setian", and should

be regarded as a transitional phase between ordinary existence and initiation. For that reason,

instead of the red I° Baphomet of the Church, the medallion of the Setian I° would be white.

The Witch/Warlock II° of the Church had signified the passage of a basic test. In the prior

organizations, past the "entrance grade", there had been a long ladder of knowledge-grades to

climb, signifying laborious accumulation of useless/trivial occult obscurata. The most general

prefix for these stages had been "Adept", and that sounded correct enough providing that the

recipient **was** indeed adept at being what he was supposed to be, in our case a practitioner of

Black Magic. So our II° would be “Adept”, and it would signify precisely that. The Church’s II°

Baphomet had been white; our medallion was therefore red, the color of Set in ancient Egyptian

imagery.

The Priesthood III° required only a name-change: from “of Mendes” to “of Set”. The former,

within the Church, derived not from any intended Egyptian association but rather from one of

the Devil’s traditional titles as the “Goat of Mendes”.

Things got more complex beyond the III°. In the same sense as in the Church, the Priesthood

of Set was **the** essential distinction between skilled-individual and deputized-individual, so to

speak. Hence “higher” degrees in the Temple should properly be considered “aspects” or

“enhancements” of the Priesthood.

In the G.'.D.'. and A.'.A.'. (which, as non-religious entities did not have priesthoods *per se*),

initiation beyond the highest adeptship (Adeptus Exemptus) involved a formal rite of passage

“across the Abyss” [separating individual consciousness from that partaking of God/YHVH]. The

G.'.D.'., indeed, regarded such transition as so profound as to be attainable only by disincarnate

“ascended Masters”. In Crowley’s A.'.A.'. crossing of the Abyss could be done by incarnated

humans (as exemplified in his *The Vision and The Voice* record), but still denoted an evolution

from human to divine consciousness.

My first premise was that if the Temple of Set's degree system were to be purely initiatory,

none of its designations should be confused or "dual-hatted" with administrative or

organizational functions. Additionally the threefold subdivision of the Church's IV° had no

initiatory significance.

Our IV° would retain the title of "Magister/Magistra Templi", as a "Master (in the sense of a

sage) of the Temple [of Set]". There was no reference to a Cabalistic "Abyss", and there was no

essential metamorphosis of consciousness, as that has already occurred at the III°. So what **does**

change at this level of initiation? The *Book of Coming Forth by Night* had identified an "Æon of

Set" as a unique perspective on existence characteristic of Setian initiation. The Magistry, it

seemed to me, should properly identify those individuals who, beyond their Priesthoods, had

become so aware of, attuned to, and harmonized with the atmosphere of the Æon that its

representation had become their "center of gravity", their accustomed mode of existence. Yes,

that sounded appropriate - even setting aside for the moment the inconvenience that I had yet to

grapple with what the Æon of Set **was** all about!

The V° of Magus seemed easier. Anton had been one, I was now one, and because each of us

had started an initiatory organization, yes? In his case possibly, since he had taken on that title

as a symbolic borrow from Crowley; he occasionally used a longer variation, “Satanic Master”.

But here again the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* went into somewhat more detail concerning

the term, including its context as “Magus of the Æon of Set”. This fulfilled Crowley’s definition of

a Magus as the announcer or formulator of an æon. It also complemented our IV°: A Magus

apprehended a new æon; a Master comprehended it.

I carried over the colors of the III° to V° that I had recommended and Anton approved for the

Church: black, blue, and purple. Black represented the Prince & Powers of Darkness. Blue I had

taken from the robes of history’s most famous ancient sages, the priest-kings of Plato’s Atlantis.

And purple from its royal connotation, and from the *Book of the Law*’s reference to the Magus’

“purple beyond purple” magical eyesight.

In 1975 I left unaddressed, as had the Church, any state of initiation beyond Magus. The

G.'.D.'. and A.'.A.'. both included an ultimate grade of Ipsissimus, but were equally vague

concerning its characteristics. Evidently someone so thoroughly initiated could hardly be

described at all!

Having conceptualized these degrees, at least so far as was possible *a priori* in 1975, I turned

to the task of how to properly entitle them to individuals. In the Church all such designations

had been determined personally by Anton LaVey, who was responsible only to his own integrity,

and as was taken for granted to Satan, for such decisions. While this had worked well enough for

nine years, we had all seen the disastrous consequences of his abrogating those two

responsibilities in 1975.

Nor, of course, did I envision the Temple of Set as an institution of which I would be the

permanent and only High Priest.

The solution seemed inherent in the characteristics of the degrees. A III° should, with the

perception and authority of the Priesthood of Set, be able to recognize an Initiate who had

become genuinely adept in the application of Black Magic. And yes, **recognition** was the proper

term too, in an environment wherein initiation was inescapably individual.

Similarly a Master should be able to recognize a Priest of Set within the Æon.

Recognition of a Magus past the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* was again a challenge.

Characteristic of a Magus is Utterance of a Word (creation of a philosophy) beyond what is

conventionally or currently known. A Master "within" in an æon cannot be expected to be able to

recognize something "without" it. But a college of æonic Masters might conceivably agree on

both the current æon's limits and the initiatory substance of a philosophical concept beyond it. I

decided to proceed from this assumption.

While for the sake of simplicity here I have used the masculine degree-titles, it was always

understood that the Setian initiation system applied equally to women as Priestess, Magistra,

and Maga. In the Church no women ever advanced past the III°, and the elder initiatory

organizations tended to be male-exclusive past the Adepti grades. The Temple of Set's initiatory

and official gender-indifference has remained axiomatic throughout its history.

Now came the administrative structure of the Temple. I knew what I **didn't** want: a one-man

dictatorship as in the Church. Again that had worked well as long as Anton had exercised his

authority wisely and benevolently, but when he hadn't, it disintegrated. Drawing on my Knights

of Dunamis and Alpha Phi Omega experience, I resolved to design an organization with

cooperative, interlocking, and authority-sharing branches. I had also the convenient model of

the United States Constitution, with its balance-of-power divisions of the executive, legislative,

and judicial.

Like the Church, the Temple of Set would have a High Priest and a Council of Nine. Unlike

the Church, the Temple's Council of Nine would be collectively superior to the High Priesthood,

with the power of appointment and removal. This would be codified in a California nonprofit

Articles of Incorporation (Appendix #6 [original]) and By-Laws (Appendix #7 [current 2006]),

and the degree system would be included in those same By-Laws

beyond alteration by either the

High Priest or the Council.

Finally to counterbalance the executive power of the High Priesthood, two additional offices,

also corporate, would be created: Executive Director (to oversee all Temple administration) and

Treasurer (to oversee Temple finances). The Treasurer would respond to the Executive Director,

who would respond to the High Priest, in routine matters; but all three officers would be

individually accountable to, and appointed/removed by, the Council of Nine.

Underlying these formal organizational arrangements was my intention that they should be

as “invisible” as possible in the normal course of Temple affairs. The focus of the Temple’s

attention should be upon magical, philosophical, and initiatory matters, not administrative ones.

The legal structure and its By-Laws should properly be in the background as a consensual

framework, coming to notice only as a specific situation might require.

I thought that I had worked all of this out pretty well, and over thirty years later I can say that

both the degree system and the organizational structure of the Temple of Set have stood the test

of time very satisfactorily. Along the years we have adjusted, improved, and refined both as

necessary or desirable, but those basic 1975 premises and principles have all remained.

The next step was to fill the initial offices, of which that of Executive

Director was easily the

most crucial. This person (required to be III°+) would be at the nerve center of all Temple

administrative communications and operations. While there were many Priests and Priestesses

from the Church who could have taken on the job, I was looking for someone who would enjoy

and thrive in it - who was naturally involved with everyone and everything everywhere. One

name came instantly to mind - Bill Murray.

As documented in *The Church of Satan*, Warlock William F. Murray had been a Regional

Agent of the Church in Winnemucca, a small town hundreds of miles from anywhere else in the

middle of the Nevada desert. [Winnemucca's one bank has a plaque boasting that it was once

robbed by Butch Cassidy and his Wild Bunch.] Whatever Warlock Murray lacked in group

contact, however, he made up for in a flurry of correspondence, telephone calls, and his Regional

Agent/Carpathia Chapel newsletter *Children of the Night*. So central a crossroads had he become

by 1974 that the LaVeys, as also recounted in *COS*, began to become alarmed; if for some reason

he became disaffected, he could conceivably cause quite a widespread chain-reaction throughout

the Church. They ordered him to restrict his contacts to his Regional Agency, but a short time

later the crisis of 1975 overwhelmed that attempted clampdown.

Just how much of a clearinghouse Warlock Murray had become by then can be illustrated by

just one of a number of his letters to me at the time (Appendix #9).

Bill Murray might have been the bane of an authoritarian system seeking to keep its

extensions isolated from one another, but he was exactly what the Temple of Set would need in

its Executive Director. I asked him if he could drive to San Francisco, and I would come up from

Santa Barbara so that we could talk things over. We met at my mother's house on Saturday, June

28th and spent the next day going over my ideas for the new Temple. On Sunday, to clear our

heads, we went out for a drive around the city, and when we happened to pass the obscure

intersection of 22nd and Kansas Streets over on the Potrero Hill, Bill finally said yes, that he

would take on the Executive Directorship.

Constituting the first Council of Nine was another interesting challenge. What I finally

decided to do was to invite three of the most senior Priests as initial members, ask them to

unanimously select a *pro tem* Chairman from among themselves, then to nominate/vote in a

fourth, then for those four to nominate/vote in a fifth, and so on until the full nine initial

Councillors had been elected. Then they could formally vote on a first regular Chairman.

This arrangement worked very well. On the auspicious date of July 4th - the same day I

finalized the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws - I invited Dale Seago from Los Angeles,

Michael Grumboski from Detroit, and Robert Ethel from Washington, D.C. to be the first three

Councillors. When the first Council was finally filled by December 1975, it consisted additionally

of Thomas Huddleston of Dayton, Ohio; Ronald K. Barrett of San Francisco, California; Lilith

Sinclair of Santa Barbara, California; Jinni Bast of Spotswood, New Jersey; Amn DeCecco of

Framingham, Massachusetts, and Margaret Wendall of San Jose, California.

Also on July 4 I sent copies of the initial Articles and By-Laws to the former Church officials

and Agents who by then had endorsed the idea of the Temple of Set: Adept Tom Bari, Adept

Ronald K. Barrett, Priest Robert DeCecco, Priest Robert Ethel, Priest Michael Grumboski, Adept

Thomas Huddleston, Adept William Murray, Adept Stuart Munro, Priest Michael McQuown,

Adept Lynn Norton, Priest Dale Seago, Priestess Lilith Sinclair, Priestess Margaret Wendall, and

Adept Arthur Zabrecky.

Legally the original Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws were signed on July 29, August 1,

and August 7 by the three “filing” directors, Bill Murray, Dale Seago, and myself. They were

officially approved by the California Secretary of State on October 23 and filed in Superior Court

on October 28, 1975.

One Section of the initial By-Laws authorized the High Priest to make initiatory degree

determinations prior to the By-Laws’ official adoption, and to

communicate all such

determinations to the Executive Director and Council of Nine not later than October 31. On July

15, in one of my letters to the II°+, I wrote:

To date I have exercised the right of recognition only three times - each an instance of an

imbalance that should have been corrected long ago [in the Church of Satan]. These three

elevations were those of Stuart Munro of Ottawa to Adept II°, William F. Murray of Winnemucca

to Priest of Set III°, and Ronald K. Barrett of San Francisco to Priest of Set III°.

My original intent was to make no IV° nominations until the first Council of Nine was selected

and operational. My reasoning was based upon two factors: (1) According to the By-Laws, IV°

nominations must be approved by a majority of the Nine before taking effect. (2) IV° nominations

by me prior to the selection of the entire Council might be viewed as a means of influencing the

composition of the Council.

But a problem has arisen that has caused me to rethink this. The problem is as follows: The

Council must consist of III° + individuals. If we simply use existing Church of Satan degrees for

qualification, the potential number of persons who can be considered for Council membership is

quite limited. Furthermore we are aware that the impartiality and effective international

geographic coverage of the C/S degrees were breaking down long before now. I personally know of

several II° individuals who may very well deserve the III°. And yet I do not know them well

enough to make a decision on the matter as thorough as a proper III° recognition should be.

I have decided to resolve the matter in a fashion which I trust will reflect the Will and Mandate

of Set.

At this time, prior to the formal implementation of the By-Laws, I am naming five ladies and

gentlemen to the IV°. Without exception they are well-known throughout our entire fellowship as

Priests or Priestesses of long standing, high reputation, and distinguished achievement. In

addition it is my considered opinion that each one of them possesses the initiatory qualities

indicative of a Master of the Temple of Set. Put as directly as possible, these qualities involve an

intrinsic and proven capability to make decisions and take actions representative of the Prince of

Darkness without an **intentional** effort to do so. From a magical standpoint this is the primary

distinction between the III° and the IV°, inasmuch as the Priest or Priestess III° has access to this

power when consciously and deliberately seeking it.

In the name of Set, therefore, I now recognize as Masters of the Temple IV°: Robert Ethel,

Michael A. Grumboski, L. Dale Seago, Lilith Sinclair, and Margaret A. Wendall.

“Behold, it is I who call you, because you are the guardians of the Æon of Set, zealous in what

you do.” 39

August 21 marked the first of my High Priesthood bulletins to the Priesthood of Set. At the

time these were casually called “Xerox letters”; eventually they would be formalized into the

Priesthood newsletter *Hieroglyphs*. #III-1 went through five pages of general founding details,

from which the following is particularly noteworthy:

“Pylons”: I have had several inquiries and ideas concerning the name that would be used for

local units of the Temple. Neither “coven” nor “grotto” seemed appropriate. Priest Ronald Barrett

came up with “Pylon”, and everyone who has heard of it so far has been sitting up and barking. So

Pylon it is. The reference is to the great trapezoidal pylon gates of major Egyptian temples.

Barrett’s idea is that each Pylon of the Temple of Set is in one sense a “gate” to the entire Temple.

Magistra Margaret A. Wendall has accepted Editorship of the *Scroll of Set*. She will have a

100% free hand on all contents, so I can't tell you exactly what will appear in the first issue. But, if

it's anything like her famous *Magic Cat*, I'm sure we will not be disappointed. The first issue

should be out next month. I hope you will give her as much feedback and assistance as you

possibly can. Remember that the *Scroll* is the **only** regular means via which we can reach out and

touch isolated I°/II° members, so it has a mammoth job to do. 40

Two subsequent events marked the completion of the Temple of Set's initial organization

process. The first was a letter from the State of California Franchise Tax Board, exempting the

Temple of Set from State taxes as a religious corporation. 41 The second was a letter from the

United States Internal Revenue Service, exempting the Temple of Set from Federal income tax

under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. 42 Both represented months of

correspondence between myself and their respective offices, providing extensive and detailed

answers to their questions concerning the corporate organization and religious principles of the

Temple. We were now, as far as the United States of America was concerned, fully and formally

credentialed.

Magister Dale Seago had served as Chairman *Pro Tem* of the Council of Nine during the

several months of its initial formative nomination/voting process. When in October all seats

were filled, lots were drawn to establish initial terms of office, with

one expiring each year, thus

setting up overlapping nine-year terms. Then in December 1975 the Council elected its first full

Chairman, Magister Robert Ethel. Dale Seago remained a Councillor, of course, as well as the

Temple's corporate Treasurer.

"Well," as the Founding Fathers are rumored to have said at the completion of the United

States' Constitutional Convention in 1787, "now that we're organized, what do we do next?" 43

39 Aquino, M.A., Letter #II°-8, July 15, X/1975.

40 Aquino, M.A., Letter #III°-1, August 21, X/1975.

41 Letter, Albert D. LeBel, Supervisor, Exempt Organizations to Temple of Set, October 17, 1975.

42 Letter, Milton Cerny, Chief, Ruling Section, Exempt Organizations Branch, June 16, 1976.

43 For a survey and analysis of the aspects and implications of a Left-Hand Path religion, see Appendix #93.

5: Freedom at Point Zero

By the close of 1975 the Temple of Set had completed its initial identification and

organization processes. With a founding membership of about one hundred, most veterans of

the Church of Satan, it was ready to move forward. So where **was** "forward"?

The Left-Hand Path of least resistance, it would seem, was to continue along much the same

activity as the Church, merely exchanging Judæo-Christian dæmonic symbolism for ancient

Egyptian. But numerous problems with such a casual approach quickly became apparent.

The *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, of course, clearly called for not just a reformation of the

Church of Satan, but an entirely distinct orientation for Temple-affiliated individuals.

But apart from this a number of inadequacies and inconsistencies in the Church had been

becoming steadily more visible, and uncomfortable, during its decade of maturation.

The "founding theology" of the Church had been easy: Christianity derided and lampooned,

through the use of imagery which it itself had created to scare its own

followers into obedience.

As there was plenty of corruption and hypocrisy to be found in Christian institutions, the Church

of Satan's program here was easy indeed. However it was a "denunciation" that, once made,

really did not need endless repeating, particularly among Satanists themselves. O.K., so

Christianity is childish, hypocritical, and corrupt: point made and taken. So where do we go from

here?

Satanists inevitably, if reluctantly realized that their own deity, Satan, was a Judæo/Islamic/

Christian myth-image every bit as much as YHVH. Generally Satan simply stood for whatever

God either didn't like/permit, or wasn't willing to be blamed for. It is true that various

iconoclasts and poetic heretics throughout history - Milton, Blake, Twain, *et al.* - had shocked

and tantalized their audiences with varying heroic/romantic spins on the Devil. But invariably it

all came to the same consensual baseline: Satan was bad, harmful, false, and **evil**.

Satanists generally grappled with this in two ways. First, they affected their alliance with the

spooky, scary Devil and his dæmonic entourage; this impressed and intimidated many mainline

religionists. Secondly, if somewhat inconsistently, they asserted that Satan was really not that

reprehensible a fellow after all; he had just been the victim of a propaganda smear campaign by

his enemies.

By 1975 the limitations of this essentially defensive and negative posture had become more

and more apparent. Satanists had made it clear that they didn't like Judæo-Christianity. They

had insisted that its version of the Devil was also all wrong, at least where obviously vile

attributes and practices were concerned. But beyond these positions - which, in America's

overwhelmingly Christian culture, took seemingly endless reexplanation and reaffirmation - they

had nowhere else to go. As noted in *The Church of Satan*, Anton LaVey ultimately disengaged

from the dilemma, turning his personal "Satan" into a narcissistic and sentimental nostalgia for

the underbelly of 1940s' society. His personal charisma and artistic talent enabled him to indulge

in this reorientation more extensively and intriguingly than just about anyone else could have,

and it certainly carried his glamor along, at least among society's alienated marginalia, until his

death.

However other Satanists, myself included, were not in the least interested in similarly crying

into our beer. For us the Church, and the confrontation of Satan and Satanism, had been an ever

more electrifying and exhilarating adventure. We had taken a stand, the most daring stand,

against the "norm" not only of society, but of the very universe itself. We took fierce pride in

being "ultimate heretics", the more so because after our affirmation of

such heresy, here we **still**

stood, unassailed, unpunished, and unrepentant.

I saw a shape with human form and face,

If such should in apotheosis stand;

Deep in the shadows of a desolate land

His burning feet obtained colossal base,

And spheral on the lonely arc of space,

His head, a menace unto heavens unspanned,

Arose with towered eyes that might command

The sunless, blank horizon of that place.

And straight I knew him for the mystic one

That is the brother, born of human dream,

Of man rebellious at an unknown rod;

The mind's ideal, and the spirit's sun;

A column of clear flame, in lands extreme,

Set opposite the darkness that is God. 44

Perhaps this may explain to the yet-confused why Anton LaVey's 1975 abandonment of his

own commitment to this vision so dismayed and angered Satanists to whom it had become that

"column of clear flame" in their lives.

Nevertheless Anton was gone, and now the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* was saying that,

this departure notwithstanding, the entire conceptualization of Satan, the Church of Satan, and

indeed their entire Islamic/Judæo/Christian theological edifice, were all wrong, "useless lumber

and wreckage" to be thrown on the trash-heap of our previous education and experience.

This, I hardly need observe, was a tall order.

Jettisoning the Church of Satan - all that we had been studying, exploring, and refining for

the past ten years - was daunting enough. But the established conventional religions of the world

had, like it or not, been responsible for the prevalent shaping of human self-perception over the

last two thousand years. Even in post-Enlightenment Western cultures, Christian assumptions

and habits remain the baseline of society. For one hundred ex-Satanists to venture out into a

world, a cosmos in the utter absence of such an accustomed frame of reference seemed nothing

short of lunatic.

Or it would have had we then taken the time to really confront the implications of what we

were then setting out to do.

Pathetic earthlings - hurling your bodies out into the void, without the slightest inkling of who

or what is out here. If you had known anything about the true nature of the universe, anything at

all, you would have hidden from it in terror. 45

44 Smith, Clark Ashton, "A Vision of Lucifer" in *Selected Poems.* Sauk City: Arkham House, 1971, page #155.

45 Emperor Ming the Merciless, Ruler of the Universe, in *Flash Gordon* (1980).

As discussed in Chapter #3, ancient Egypt proved to be the gateway to

the void, in a sense

and sophistication that in 1975 we had no way to anticipate. Its academic/ archæological image

at the time was [and in those same professional circles remains today] that of a mere basic

agricultural society with an animal-totem and death-fixated mythology. For the Great Unwashed

it was the stuff of Hollywood mummy horror movies and sword-and-sandal epics, habitually (as

in *The Ten Commandments*) as the bad guy threatening virtuous Jews and protoChristian

monotheists.

To date Egypt had fared little better within organized occultism. Its mystery had made it

attractive to individuals and organizations selling exactly that, so Egyptian art, costumes, *Aida*-

processions, and talismans were a staple of Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, Illuminism, and any

number of greater or lesser imitators, all the way down to Laurel and Hardy's *Sons of the Desert*

farce (to which Anton LaVey scornfully compared the Temple of Set once he learned of its

Egyptian interests).

So had Egypt been a purely arbitrary choice for us, it would have seemed a foolish one,

carrying way too much sillified baggage along with its apparently meager historical significance.

What overruled all of this - initially for myself and later for a great many others over the decades

to follow - was direct contact with one of Egypt's supposedly false and nonexistent "gods", Set.

“I’d enjoy it all more if I knew what it meant.”

That pleased Conchis. He sat back and smiled.

“My dear Nicholas, man has been saying what you have just said for the last ten thousand

years. And the one common feature of all the gods he has said it to is that not one of them has ever

returned an answer.” 46

Only in this instance an answer **had** been returned, and that mere fact made everything very

different indeed.

Historically humanity has developed its base of knowledge by three means: observation,

reasoning, and belief. The first, especially since its release from dogmatic constraints upon the

Enlightenment, has today matured into the well-known “scientific method”. The second

originally enjoyed prominence dating from the logical discourses of Socrates and his Greek

colleagues, but except in acknowledged matters of opinion has generally given way to science.

The third - belief - is neither scientific nor logical, indeed emphatically and sometimes

combatively so. This is the realm of religion, of superstition, of mere feeling. It can range from

the staid dictates of organized churches in the name(s) of their God/ gods, to a simple, gnawing

personal conviction that, scientific evidence and/or logical reasoning notwithstanding, the **truth**

is otherwise.

As conventional religion, particularly in the West, has degenerated

into little more than

unthinking social rote-participation, the average person's experience with belief-knowledge is

perhaps more easily exemplified by phenomena such as romantic love, which is an emotion or

sensation neither scientific nor logical. It is also present in situations of trust, in which a child,

student, subordinate, or disciple accepts something as true because of trust in the source so

stating.

In the case of the fledgling Temple of Set, the premises of its identity and authenticity were

clearly in the realm of belief: mine in the truth of my own apprehension of the *Book of Coming*

Forth by Night, and other Setians' in trust of that belief of mine, at least until such time as they

might experience comparable direct apprehensions of Set. For now the tacit consensus was to

give Magus Michael Aquino plenty of time [and rope] to resolve this mystery of Greater Black

46 Fowles, John, *The Magus* (Revised Edition 1977). Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1965, page #185.

Magic, and in the meantime to see how this new Temple of Set might exercise its talents in the

less-ethereal pursuits of its Lesser cousin.

Lesser Black Magic as defined by the Church of Satan referred to the use of obscure laws of

nature, and/or clever manipulation of situations or perceptions, to facilitate or achieve the

magician's purpose. Thus it was an extension of stage or "carny" magic at its most simple, and

the control of entire populations at its other extreme. Until fairly recently in history LBM had

been practiced only at a modest, localized level, and then as an implicit personal skill rather than

as a deliberate, scientific system of power and control. It was as such a skill that it was explored

by scholars such as Niccolo Machiavelli in *The Prince*.

The Church of Satan's membership interest in LBM had never gone much beyond

impressing/manipulating the opposite sex or nudging a job promotion. Anton LaVey liked to

claim dramatic control-workings for himself, the shock-and-awe of which escalated after 1975

until he was grappling with a DERO-like conspiracy of opponents worldwide. 47

It was apparent to me that the Temple of Set would, in the normal course of its future, be

taking a far more methodical and sophisticated interest in LBM than had heretofore been the

case. That raised the question of ethical guidelines. If we intended to teach new Setians the

principles of LBM and encourage them to apply those principles without the Temple, some self-

conscience of rightness/wrongness was essential. Ordinary human societies have laws, mores,

and customs to pre/proscribe specific types of behavior. Since the principles and techniques of

LBM are generally unknown by those societies, however, there are many gaps in existing law,

and socialization generally, capable of addressing them.

During 1974-76, as it happened, I was pursuing a Master's degree in Political Science at the

University of California, Santa Barbara. One of my specialty fields was Political Theory, which

involved numerous seminars in philosophy. This could not have come at a more fortuitous time,

as it sensitized me to ethical issues and options in a variety of social contexts.

Two of my professors, William Ebenstein and Raghavan Iyer, were especially influential.

Ebenstein, a student at the University of Vienna and the London School of Economics, had gone

on to a distinguished teaching career first at Princeton and then at UCSB. Over the years he had

authored several benchmark works in political theory, several of which remain influential today.

Ebenstein liked my work in his seminars, but was clearly distressed over my refusal to agree

with him that philosophy began with the Greeks. By late 1975 my own research had convinced

me that Egypt deserved this honor, which I argued in more than one graduate paper. We finally

reached an amusing but acceptable compromise: He introduced me to Henri Frankfort's *Before*

Philosophy, which paradoxically surveyed "pre-philosophy philosophies" throughout many pre-

Greek civilizations of antiquity. [Frankfort also wrote another work, *Kingship and the Gods*,

which provided important linkages from Plato's philosopher-kings to the governmental

principles of Egypt.]

Raghavan Iyer had journeyed from his native India to England, where he took his doctorate

in philosophy at Oxford University before assuming a professorship at UCSB. The author of

several brilliant textbooks concerning Gandhi, Plato, and both theoretical and applied politics,

he was also a revered sage in the Theosophical Society, for which he had written many esoteric

papers. [Many of these can be found today on the Internet at http://theosophy.org.]

Iyer and I hit it off almost immediately insofar as both of us were fascinated with political

science in both exo- and esoteric contexts. During many of his seminars, and the informal

coffeehouse gatherings that often followed them, he and I would argue passionately about the

47 In 1945 the science-fiction magazine *Amazing Stories* published a tale about DEraged RObots lurking in

subterranean caves, which, anticipating L. Ron Hubbard's fictional "dianetics", was believed as reality by credulous

cultists henceforth.

music of the spheres, immortality/transmigration of the soul, and Atlantis while other students

just gazed at us and shook their heads in bewilderment.

Iyer certainly did not doubt the existence of pre-Greek philosophy - he and Ebenstein

maintained a respectful professional distance in the Department - but it vexed him a good deal

that I had been suckered in by the teachings of that disreputable occult charlatan and crank

Anton LaVey. I on the other hand made no secret of my consternation that he had been suckered

in by the teachings of that disreputable occult charlatan and crank Helena Blavatsky. This

resulted in a steady stream of “A-” grades for me throughout my studies with him. He once

remarked that any other student turning in work of my quality would get straight “A”s, but in

view of my initiated potential he felt honor-bound to goad me with that “-”. So I took it as a

compliment, and indeed would have been alarmed if at some point it had disappeared.

As Ebenstein had guided my research into ancient political and philosophical thought

towards careful, painstaking standards, so Iyer introduced me to the metaphysics and cosmology

underlying that same field of study. Both, of course, I took back with me to the Temple of Set,

which I increasingly saw as a Pythagorean/Platonic academy destined to go far beyond

conventional social and organizational limits. We would not only undertake true initiation as

individual Setians, but the Temple itself would become a metastructure both to enhance our

personal efforts and to etherealize its own metaphysical reality.

Meanwhile in the ordinary world outside these ivory towers, other influences were at work in

society which would also shape aspects of the fledgling Temple of Set. If the 1950s had been a

decade of Eisenhower-era conformity to traditional American values, the 1960s had ruptured

this comforting norm with the twin shocks of the John Kennedy assassination and the Vietnam

War. Disillusionment and social alienation led to mass movements of popular rebellion and

revolution, which seemed for a brief time to actually be changing the Old Order for a more

peaceful and loving New Age. But that in turn lost its energy and innocence with the

assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, and the ultimate hippie nightmares

of Charles Manson.

By the 1970s many visionaries and utopians had given up on Earth's human civilizations

altogether and were looking for another Way Out - which turned out to be a Way Up, to outer

space. George Lucas' 1977 *Star Wars* arrived just in time to touch a match to this escapism; the

movie became a worldwide sensation like nothing before or since. In addition to reenergizing its

predecessor *Star Trek*, it also jump-started real interest in space colonies and emigration,

through such cooperatives as the L5 Society and the World Future Society [in both of which I

held academic-level membership].

L5, named for the 5th Lagrangian libration point of gravitational equilibrium between Earth

and the Moon, was thought to be the ideal location for a permanent human space colony. The

Society, founded in 1975 just two months after the Temple of Set,

took its inspiration from the

space-colonial writings of Gerard K. O'Neill, most notably *The High Frontier*. As at the same

time America's new space shuttle was popularly regarded as the precursor to openly-available

civilian space transport, L5 seemed entirely reasonable and practical. [Twelve years later the

political paranoia of the 1980s, with its militarization of the space shuttle and other space efforts,

doomed L5. It disintegrated into the National Space Society 48 , an Earthbound NASA fan club,

which it remains to this day. Like the decaying bride in *Great Expectations*, the NSS still speaks

wistfully about space colonization, but the excitement that it was really soon to happen is gone.]

1975 also marked the revival of one of San Francisco's most famous Haight-Ashbury era rock

bands, the Jefferson Airplane - now, in synch with space, the Jefferson Starship. Like the Temple

of Set, it seemed mesmerized by the significance and power of that year, celebrated in its songs

48 http://www.nss.org

such as "Ride the Tiger" and "War Movie". I had sent one of the thirty original copies of the *Book*

of Coming Forth by Night to the Starship's Paul Kantner, commencing a friendship and

exchange-of-vision which has endured to this day. [Some sparks of this, originally published in

the *Scroll of Set* and Order of the Trapezoid's *Runes*, etc. appear here as Appendix #9.]

Over the Halloween weekend the first of what were to become a spectacular series of

international conclaves of the Temple of Set was held in Santa Barbara, as recounted in the

December issue of the *Scroll*:

Friday evening (Halloween): Those who had arrived by Friday evening were treated to dinner

and a reception at our High Priest's home. Wall certificates were presented to those who attended.

Those who were not present Friday evening were invited to lunch with the High Priest on

Saturday, and received wall certificates at that time.

Saturday afternoon (November 1): The highlight of the discussion period was the presentation

of the final papers which make the Temple of Set a nonprofit, tax-exempt California religious

corporation. The High Priest explained that federal tax-exempt status should now be easily

obtained.

Also of note during this session was the choosing by lot of the terms of office of the Council of

Nine, which are as follows: Priest Thomas S. Huddleston - 9 years, Priest Ronald K. Barrett - 8

years, Magistra Lilith Sinclair - 7 years, Priest Amn DeCecco - 6 years, Priestess Jinni Bast - 5

years - Magister Michael A. Grumboski - 4 years, Magister Robert Ethel - 3 years, Magister L. Dale

Seago - 2 years, and Magistra Margaret Wendall - 1 year. It must be noted that these people do not

automatically leave the Council at the end of these terms. They will be reconsidered at that time. If

their continued service on the Council will benefit the Temple of Set, they will serve another nine

year term.

Saturday evening (November 1): The Conclave Banquet was held at Squire Richard's Pub in a

truly Old English setting, with "wenches" serving table and a minstrel who sang to us.

Saturday evening Ritual (November 1): The Conclave Ritual was held at 11 PM. A specially-

made candelabra, with a candle representing each degree of membership in the Temple of Set, was

lit. Those members of the Council of Nine who attended were presented with insignia of office

(*Tcham* scepters handcrafted by Priest Murray). The highlight, however, was the presentation to

the High Priest of a sword, the Double Crown, and a crook and flail.

Sunday morning (November 2): Breakfast at Squire Richard's Pub at what must be one of the

minor disasters of Santa Barbara history! Each person ordered something different, and a fuse

blew, throwing the toaster, the coffee maker (and probably the cook) out of order for awhile. All

felt the waitresses could have charged us an "entertainment tax" for the way they kept their

composure and even joked with us about the breakdown "we" had caused.

Much important business was accomplished; Setians who had been corresponding with each

other for a long time had a chance to meet face-to-face. New friendships were formed, and all who

attended left with a feeling that the Temple of Set is truly a

Brotherhood.

Thanks are due first to Magistra Sinclair, who coordinated the conclave; to the High Priest,

who so graciously opened his home to us; to Priest Murray for the rite observed and long hours

making the candelabra, pentagram and insignia; to the motel personnel who made the stay

pleasant; and to the staff of Squire Richard's who made our meals together most enjoyable.

Among the topics of discussion and speculation at this initial conclave was the meaning of the

further human evolution as implied by the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*. Was this to be

understood and interpreted as a purely initiatory development of consciousness, or as a physical

change of some sort, or as a species-migration phenomenon [as into space]? Until we resolved

this, Setians decided to look into all three options. On the South Solstice of 1975, I sent the

Priesthood my thoughts on the issue: *Setamorphosis* [Appendix #10].

Setians responded very positively to this rather extraordinary prospectus, indeed more so

than I had frankly anticipated. By the Vernal Equinox of 1976 there had been such a flurry of

organizational developments, to say nothing of brainstorming, that it was time for an update,

and so I sent the Priesthood *Setamorphosis II* [Appendix #11].

Looking back on these documents and the escapist-fantastic visions they express, it may

seem, from a perspective thirty years later, that the Temple of Set was off to a spacecrazed start.

Well, it simply did not seem that way in the mid-1970s. Public access to space, consequent to the

successful invention of the space shuttle and the appearance of several non-governmental space

companies such as the West German OTRAG, seemed both practical and excitingly imminent.

And the prolific, space-colonization literature lent serious depth to such speculations generally.

2001: A Space Odyssey, with a Hilton Hotel on its spectacular space wheel, was just around the

corner - inevitably a site for a future Setian conclave! [Such dreams, incidentally, have persisted

to this day among the more visionary elements of humanity, resulting in efforts such as Space

Adventures Ltd. (http://www.spaceadventures.com). We may have that orbital/Lunar conclave

yet!

But in 1976, while we waited for OTRAG to start selling tickets, the Temple had other

concerns and interests here on Earth. We had by now completed most of the original

administrative tasks - elegant fire-enameled Pentagram of Set medallions from the Wolf-Brown

Company, courtesy of Setian Robert Moffatt; public information/ membership brochures; a

dazzling 3D-effect membership card created by Bill Murray, etc.

The *Scroll of Set* was purring along monthly, under Magistra Wendall's Editorship, ably

assisted by Priest Michael Waters, Adept Alan Sturrock, and Setian

Patricia Turner of the

Bubastis Pylon in San Jose, California. Content was kaleidoscopic: Setian yoga, religious/legal

issues, ritual magical theory, poetry, Egyptian studies, personal artwork, book reviews, reports

from various officials, conclave invitations and summaries, comparisons of Setian philosophy

with that of other occult systems, and even a commentary on the American Bicentennial

celebration and its nation-touring “Freedom Train”. Honorary Setian Forrest J Ackerman

contributed an article explaining why he ever got started collecting science fiction.

Concerning the more permanent literature of the Temple, there was initial consensus that it

should be private to the membership, not commercially published like the *Satanic Bible* and

Rituals. One of the more famous repositories-of-wisdom in traditional occultism had been the

mythical *Emerald Tablet of Thoth*, so why not a *Ruby Tablet of Set* [reflecting his totem-color]

in reality? Magister Robert Ethel volunteered to undertake it as a project. Eventually the *Ruby*

Tablet would become the II° + component of an entire *Jeweled Tablets of Set* series, extending

from the *Crystal Tablet* of the I° + to the *Topaz Tablet* of the VI°.

As of July 1976, presented at the First Eastern Conclave of the Temple in Washington, D.C.,

Ethel’s original draft of the *Ruby Tablet* was 41 pages long. Today it has mushroomed into the

multi-thousands, to the point where it can only be Internet/CD-based.

Prior to the arrival of the

Internet, Adepts ordering the *RT* would be startled to see a huge stack of fat red binders awaiting

them at the post office or conclave.

Beyond the Temple's internal literature, of course, there was a good deal of information of

interest to us in the commercially-published realm. A Reading List seemed like a good idea, and

I took that job on myself; I would keep it until 2003.

Since joining the Church of Satan in 1969, I had become a voracious occult- and outré-book

devourer and collector. My bookshelves overflowed into my closets, and the makeshift shelves

therein were ultimately packed three-deep with the Good, the Bad, and the Arguable. This was

both useful and problematic for a Temple of Set Reading List. Useful because over the years I

had pretty much zeroed in on the best stuff. Problematic because some of that best stuff wasn't

readily available in normal bookstores, or was comparatively expensive when it was. In my RL

introduction, accordingly, I encouraged Setians to make the acquaintance of old-book stores,

book-search services, and the interlibrary loan services of community and university libraries.

Back then that took a good deal more dedication, perseverance, and time than today's instant

Internet quests!

The categories of the Reading List upon which I decided reflected the

wide range of interests

of the Temple of Set. They have remained unchanged in the subsequent three decades, except

that I and others have added some items and - following the revival of the Order of the Trapezoid

- a category on the ancient north European runic arts & sciences was created.

The Reading List appears herein as Appendix #12. Within the context of this memoir I am

including it as one of the best ways to illustrate both the wide-ranging interests of the Temple

and the focus & depth of resultant investigations. [Note also that passages of this narrative, and

within various other Appendices, make reference to Reading List entries by their code number.]

By now it can be seen that the Temple of Set's approach to individual initiation, as well as to

its own identity as **the** Temple of Set, was far more multifaceted than most nonSetians [and

many shellshocked new Setians] appreciated. As can be seen from the contents of the *Jeweled*

Tablets, the collected issues of the *Scroll of Set*, and the numerous papers of the Temple's

Orders, Elements, Pylons, and individual Initiates, the Reading List was appropriately a point of

departure, not an end in itself.

That departure was made easier by Priest Ronald K. Barrett and his Anubis Pylon in San

Francisco, who inaugurated the Ap-uat Library Project (ALP) to further identify, track down, and

either acquire or otherwise make available to Setians for specialized

learning and research.

Wrote Barrett in the October 1976 *Scroll*:

The Anubis Pylon has been organizing a new element for the Temple of Set which includes

book research, data bank, and experimentation coordination. This new element is designed to

assist individual Setians, pylons, and other elements by collecting and providing information that

will save footwork, effort, and time.

Starting 1 October Xl ALP will be able to provide upon request book lists by subject matter or

author which may include [but not be limited to] the High Priest's reading list. These book lists are

for informational purposes **only** and will not carry a recommendation. Book reviews sent to ALP

by members of the Temple will be included in the *ALP Newsletter*.

It will also be possible to order some books directly from ALP, as some publishers are offering

discounts to the Temple. Magistra Sinclair in Santa Barbara will be in charge of the book orders,

but all orders must be sent initially to ALP in San Francisco for processing and paid in advance.

Details will be provided in the newsletter, as they are too involved to include here.

Another function of ALP is assistance in coordinating research and experiments by recording

who has knowledge of what, who is doing what, who wants to research what, who can help whom,

etc. The effectiveness of this depends equally upon the input and output of information. You will

greatly enhance the potential of this program by writing out your answers to the questionnaire

below and mailing them in to ALP. All answers will be kept confidential, and only your names and

interests will be used for referrals.

The newsletter mentioned above will be a summary of accumulated general data, book

reviews, special reports and articles, etc. There will be no regular publishing date for the

newsletter - neither will there be a standard rate of subscription. The price will be based on 10

cents/page and announced in the *Scroll* when each new issue is ready. The first issue is now in

process and should be available around November 1st.

Send any inquiries, requests, book reviews, comments, etc., and your answers to the

questionnaire to Priest Ronald K. Barrett, Anubis Pylon, San Francisco, California. All information

and/or inquiries will be handled on an individual basis.

ALP Questionnaire

Name, Title/Degree, Date, Occupation/ Profession(s).

What have been your past fields of study (formal and/or informal)?

What are your current fields of study (formal and/or informal)?

What subjects do you prefer for casual reading?

Please state the nature of any experiments you have conducted or participated in and the

outcome, if known.

Please state the nature of any experiments and/or research you might like to conduct.

Please list any periodicals, magazines, etc. that you feel would be beneficial for a library of the

Temple of Set to subscribe to, and explain why.

What books, articles, etc., would you recommend to other members of the Temple of Set?

Please include all pertinent information: title, subject matter, author, publisher, etc.

Please state any ideas or suggestions you might have for this project.

May we refer you to other members whose interests parallel your own?

How might this project best serve you?

Thus, a year after its founding, the Temple of Set was off to a pretty energetic start, as I

recounted in my first annual report to the membership in the June 1976 *Scroll* (Appendix #13).

One sign of our success that gave me particular pleasure: at our first annual membership

renewal date we lost only one Setian I°. During its lifetime, by contrast, the Church of Satan had

experienced roughly a 50% annual turnover rate. 49

Despite all of the organizational work, Setians actually found some time to just get together

for socializing, dining, and even a little Black Magic. Over the South Solstice 1976 weekend in

December, for instance, another conclave was held in San Jose, hosted by the Bubastis Pylon. A

very pleasant day was devoted to touring the Rosicrucian Park headquarters of the AMORC, a

remarkable complex of ancient Egyptian architecture, somewhat incongruously right in the

midst of residential neighborhoods.

At this time the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art had also negotiated the most

impressive exhibition of artifacts from Pharaoh Tutankhamen's tomb ever to tour the United

States. As it traveled around the country to various museums, groups of Setians met to attend

and admire it. For those who for reasons of budget or distance could not visit the Tut Show in

person, the Temple of Set purchased and circulated *gratis* a complete set of color slides of all the

exhibit artifacts, along with an audio narrative of them by the Metropolitan Museum's Director.

Somewhat less successful, commencing in mid-1976 and continuing for the next year (as best

I can make out from the documents in question) was one of the Temple of Set's two comic

pratfalls in its ancient Egyptian explorations. Magistra Margaret Wendall, a devotee of Egypt's

calendar, proposed that the Temple of Set adopt it instead of the conventional Gregorian one.

Well, why not? It sounded like fun, and might have the added benefit of keeping nonSetians in

the dark about the scheduling of Temple events.

Unfortunately the new/old system of days and months ("7 Pharmuthi XXI") also managed to

confuse all of **us** to the extent that we didn't know what was happening when either! Some

months later - however long it really was no one knows for certain -

we slunk grouchily back into

Gregoriana.

At one of our first conclaves we also experimented with Egyptian eye-makeup - the heavy,

black extended outlines that one sees on ancient statues, wall-reliefs, and Hollywood monster

movies. As part of a total appearance makeover, I daresay, it might look impressive. Mixed with

any elements of modern attire, mustaches & beards, Afro- or other 1970s- hairdos, 5 o'clock

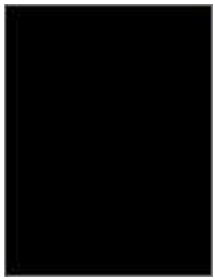
shadows, etc., the effect was beyond hilarious. [I will give the Setian ladies credit for doing a

better job of their makeup, but of course they had a head start (no pun intended).] Only a few

slapstick photos have survived, and **no**, one is **not** going to be included in the Plates section of

this memoir! Well, maybe ...

49 Aquino, M.A., Priesthood Letter #III°-22, 9/8/76.



6: Jackal Rising

Brien's First Law: At some time in the life cycle of virtually every organization, its ability

to succeed in spite of itself runs out.

Brontosaurus Principle: Organizations can grow faster than their brains can manage

them in relation to their environment and to their own physiology; when this occurs,

they are an endangered species.

From its very beginning the Temple of Set was much more than the extended vision and/or

philosophy of a single individual. Initially, of course, it consisted of those Initiates of the Church

of Satan who, like myself, had rejected Anton LaVey's May 1975 decision to commercialize the

Church; and who, after reading the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, had decided that the

concept and orientation of the Temple of Set resonated with them.

Such resonance took as many different forms as there were individuals.

• Some saw the Temple as essentially a continuation of the previous Church's Satanism,

albeit re-tinted to ancient Egyptian hues.

• Some saw it as a rejection of Satanism altogether in favor of a reach-back to ancient

Egyptian mythology and philosophy.

• Some saw it as an entirely new vision of the future, borrowing only such trappings

from Satanism and/or ancient Egypt as might be useful or artistic for illustrative

purposes.

• Still others had no preconceptions or agendæ, and were content to let whatever-this-

thing-might-be just simmer in the frying pan until it began to smell and taste good.

This heterogeneous, collegial, unhurried, and pleasant atmosphere set the tone for what the

Temple of Set would generally continue to be to the present day, and I think goes a long way

towards explaining why it has not fallen victim to either Brien's First Law or the Brontosaurus

Principle. Where the Temple has occasionally sailed through rough seas has usually resulted

from, or at least been catalyzed by some individual's or group's desire to create a narrower, more

uniform focus. Such ambitions have generally arisen with the best of intentions: a wish to

energize the Temple more, to see all Setians of all degrees as exemplars of excellence, to

accentuate the Temple as an occult institution or as a social presence. Unfortunately for such

crusaders, yet I think fortunately for the Temple's underlying authenticity and substance, efforts

to marshal Setians are rather akin to herding cats.

The first year in particular of the Temple was marked by regular and abundant dialogue

among the founding Masters and Priests as to just how this new approach to initiation could be

defined, measured, evaluated, and administered. An entirely freeform, anarchic approach would

render any kind of collective degree-system confusing at best, incoherent and meaningless at

worst. It was easy enough to establish ordered **procedures** for initiatory degree-recognitions;

the hard part was ensuring a **standard of integrity and quality** whereby an Adept, say,

recognized for demonstrated competence in one “universe of interests” could be seen on a par

with another of quite different experience and abilities.

Indeed the five original Masters of the Temple exemplified such divergent perspectives:

Margaret Wendall was a practical, no-nonsense personality with interests in scientific

fields such as modern & ancient astronomy, [the then fledgling field of] personal

computers, and medieval Russian mythology. Throughout the years of the Church of

Satan, she had gained a national reputation for being among the most stable,

levelheaded, and rational of the Priesthood. Her Bubastis Chapel in San Jose was

similarly mature, tranquil, and commonsensible, as was her long-running newsletter

The Magic Cat. In 1975 she promptly volunteered her editorial and

professional-

layout skills for the creation of the Temple's *Scroll of Set* newsletter, establishing a

standard of excellence and æsthetics for that publication which has continued ever

since.

Robert Ethel of Washington, D.C. was a charming, ebullient artist whose Asmodeus

Grotto had attracted Satanists of a similarly eccentric, bohemian verve. He was also a

seasoned and widely-read occultist of "the old school", whose opinions and judgments

reflected what he saw as the best mixture of many approaches to wisdom. An

ichthyologist and owner of his own aquarium business, his home was almost as exotic

as Anton LaVey's, presided over by his gorgeous white cockatoo.

Michael Grumboski of Detroit had come to national notice in the Church of Satan by

being a strong advocate for integrity and "constructive repair" in first the Wayne

West/Babylon Grotto and then the John DeHaven/Stygian Grotto crises [see my

Church of Satan]. Looking rather quaintly like Walt Disney's Ichabod Crane, "Shai"

was modest, unassuming, and invariably polite-to-a-fault. He shared Margaret

Wendall's interest in computers, though on mainframe instead of personal hardware.

L. Dale Seago, most recently of Los Angeles, was the adventurer of the group. Previously

a Marine Corps noncommissioned officer in North Carolina and a martial arts Black

Belt, he had moved first to Texas, then to Los Angeles, where his Yuggoth Grotto had

attracted a colorful collection of old-guard Church-of-Satanists as well as *avant-garde*

artists, entertainers, and magicians. Strongly principled and fiercely loyal to causes

that inspired him, he moved to Santa Barbara shortly after the Temple's founding to

complete a Master's degree in Political Science from the University of California, along

with a commission as a Military Intelligence officer in the U.S. Army. His essays about

the more complex issues and applications of Black Magic in the *Scroll* could always be

counted upon to raise the bar of research precision and intellectual excellence.

Lilith Sinclair had soared to prominence as the darkly-beautiful and fiery Priestess of

New York City's Lilith Grotto, famous both for her Grotto's dramatic activities and

community presence and for her own public personification of the Church of Satan,

which had led one Pennsylvania cultural magazine to dub her "the occult superstar of

the east". Moving to Santa Barbara in the early 1970s, she had gone on to become a

major national influence in the Church, particularly in its developing inter-Grotto and

regional programs. She brought to the Temple of Set a deeply intuitive and romantic

conviction that invariably lent a richness and depth to what could otherwise have been

a rather too-cerebral atmosphere.

Individually and cooperatively these founding Masters established a climate of

encouragement of and respect for personal idiosyncrasy in Setian initiation. They proved that it

was indeed possible to have widely-alien talents, interests, accomplishments, yet respect one

another fully and sincerely. In this Setians of today owe a debt to these original Masters that can

scarcely be overstated.

Quickly emerging in this rich new garden of initiation were the initial Priests and Priestesses

of Set. As in the old Church, these individuals were at the nerve center of all interactivity

between the Temple as an institution and the I°/II° membership. Each Priest, each Priestess

became in effect the “personification” of the Temple of Set to these affiliates. They were living

examples of what it really meant to come into being as an awakened child of Set.

Easily the most well-known and flamboyant was William F. Murray of Winnemucca, Nevada,

whose affable gregariousness throughout the Church of Satan had first amused, then alarmed

the LaVeys. In designing the Temple of Set, I had created the office of Executive Director as chief

administrative officer, to complement and counterbalance the High

Priest as chief executive

officer. Bill slipped into the EDship as naturally and effortlessly as though it were an old pair of

Levis. He quickly organized, delegated, and coordinated the Temple's several organizational

services: publications, records, communication networks, finances, calendars, and programs. All

this from a modest little white house in Winnemucca, itself a modest little way stop in the middle

of the Nevada desert. Indeed a local visitor to Bill's house would have noticed nothing

unremarkable about its Norman Rockwell-homespun decor - unless he happened to be invited

into the basement, where the Twilight Zone prevailed: the ED office, a bewildering workshop of

implements and artifacts from the mundane to the Lovecraftian, and a ritual chamber with the

greatest and wildest assortment of electronic and mechanical special effects I have ever seen. If

Priest Beauclerk of Carpathia (Bill's magical persona) needed the clash of a gong or a lightning-

flash outside the [artificial] window, the flick of a hidden solenoid switch beneath the arm of his

throne sufficed.

By day Bill was a welfare investigator for the State of Nevada, crisscrossing the desert,

scattered small towns, and Indian reservations in his bright yellow Volkswagen "Thing" (a

recreation of the World War II Wehrmacht *Kübelwagen*). Unsurprisingly his visits were not

always welcome; he was regularly shot at, as was his house. In time-

honored Nevada tradition, I

gather that the aim was always deliberately high so as not to actually hurt anyone. As previously

mentioned, Winnemucca's principal landmark and major claim to fame remained a plaque in

front of its sole bank proudly commemorating that Butch Cassidy and his Wild Bunch had

robbed it in 1900.

Priest Robert "Jzamon" DeCecco was a cheerful Italian living in Boston, Massachusetts,

whose Amon Pylon became the focus of Setian activity in New England as had its Satanic

predecessor the Cavern of Amon. Warm, hospitable, and dashing, Jzamon would go on to an

enduring presence throughout the Temple as a later Master and member of the Council of Nine.

Dayton, Ohio was home to Priest Thomas and Priestess Colleen Huddleston, also Church

veterans, and well-known throughout the Temple for Tom's experiments with unusual and

remarkable musical instruments such as the thermion and the moog. Colleen was a talented

painter, whose Setian portraits, composites, and Tarot cards quickly became legendary, and the

two of them collaborated in magnificent illuminated calligraphy as well, which they brought to

bear upon various ritual working documents and records.

Priestess Jinni Bast of New Jersey and Priest Tom Bari of Pennsylvania were both alumni of

New York's old Lilith Grotto. They went on to introduce the Temple of Set in their respective

locales, and Jinni served several years as a member of the Council of Nine.

But easily the most dramatic, charismatic, and creative of the original Priests of Set was

Ronald K. Barrett, who a short time before the 1975 disintegration of the Church of Satan had

moved from New York City, where he had been a principal personality in the Lilith Grotto, to

San Francisco. There he founded his own [aptly-named, as it turned out, being the final Grotto of

the Church] Twilight Grotto, which in 1975 became the Anubis Pylon of the Temple of Set.

Ron, or "Anubis" as everyone came to call him, looked as though he had stepped right out of a

Frank Frazetta poster: lean, muscular, with a Mephistophelian face that could instantly switch

between horror-movie glower and friendly laughter. If the LaVeys had feared Bill Murray for his

roughshod-overrunning of communications barriers, they disliked Barrett - particularly once he

arrived in San Francisco - for possibly another reason: he was easily as personable, dramatic,

and artistically talented a Satanist as Anton himself.

In the new environment of the Temple of Set, Anubis established an early reputation as one

of the most serious and dedicated scholars of Egyptian initiation. Introduced to Isha Schwaller

de Lubicz' *Her-Bak* by two of his Adepts, Lindajean Parrinello (later Reynolds) and Alexandra

Sarris, he quickly became focused upon Isha's and her husband Rene's "symbolism" approach as

the most accurate and effective key to Egyptology, and delved into its study with the same energy

that characterized all of his passions.

Most original Setians, as in their Church of Satan past, "didn't give up their day jobs" while

pursuing their initiation. We had all become accustomed to, experienced in, and admittedly

resigned to balancing dual identities as ordinary "working stiffs" in conventional society and as

Initiates among our fellows behind the closed doors of the sanctuary. Not so Ronald K. Barrett:

His journey was complete, uncompromised, and all-consuming. If that meant that he lived in

isolation and near-poverty, so be it. Perhaps no occultist since Aleister Crowley's teacher and

Buddhist monk Allan Bennett has exuded such a singular, pure, and driven dedication to

achieving his divinity. And, ultimately, he almost did it.

In this the Temple of Set both aided and impeded him. It opened unlimited vistas before him

and encouraged him to ravish himself within them; simultaneously it frustrated his desire to

take others with him into what was necessarily a unique and personal experience. A Black

Magician *par excellence* he was; a herder of cats he discovered he was not.

Within a year after the Temple's founding, Barrett decided that the "arid wilderness of steel

and stone" that was San Francisco was woefully inadequate for the

initiatory environment he

deemed essential for himself and his students. He and his companion Adept Ricco Zappitelli

looked around for a suitably sacred site and found it atop a wild mountain near the northern

California town of Potter Valley. *XemSet* he named the small plot of land they bought there, and

over the next several years, and with the added arms, backs, and perspiration of visiting/

volunteering Setians, gradually began to carve it into a magical sanctuary. There was a small

cabin for themselves and visitors; there were outdoor meditation areas; there was a winding path

up the hill to a hidden ceremonial court suitable for nighttime pageants and magical workings

under the stars. Far away from the lights of any city, enveloped by the utter silence of the

backwoods, *XemSet* was indeed a beautiful and magical place, wherein very little of humancraft

was either needed or wanted. Nevertheless the tireless Barrett continued to accent it with

thrones, standards, portals, and altars, all hand wrought and exquisitely painted.

Barrett devoted no less attention to his personal ceremonial and religious attire, which again

was all handcrafted to the admiration of other Setians. And at least once with slapstick results:

After being Recognized as a Master of the Temple in August 1977, he proudly arrived at a

Priesthood dinner in San Jose wearing the blue clerical collar insert to

which he was now

entitled. Except that he had accented it with blue glitter. Bill Murray glanced at the sparkling

item, swished over to him, shook his hand limply, and in his best drag-queen-caricature lisp

gushed, “Ron - it’s **just you**!” The meeting exploded in laughter, and so, after first going beet-

red, did the new Master of the Temple.

New Setians continued to enter the Temple in a steady stream, and predominantly these were

now individuals who were not long-term Church of Satan alumni. They were on the whole not

interested in that organization or in Satanism *per se*; they were attracted purely to the message

and invitation of the Temple of Set, which they saw as a darker, more glamorous and serious

alternative to the numerous fluffy-bunny occultisms that had proliferated in the New Age

atmosphere of the 1970s. These newcomers didn’t arrive with blank, gullible minds; they were

already hardened philosophers who had put conventional wisdom to the test and found it

inadequate to deal with the greater realities of existence they had come to confront.

This “second generation” of Setians took the Temple of Set not on its terms, and not on the

coattails of any lingering Church of Satan momentum, but on a pragmatic basis. If it proved to

indeed facilitate their personal adventure into the Mysteries, they would stay with it. If not, they

would continue their search elsewhere.

This rationale was respected, indeed cultivated by the Temple itself, which gradually

configured its I° entry degree into what *Her-Bak* termed a “peristyle” or “courtyard” of mutual

acquaintance and evaluation. New Setians I° were given a maximum of two years to qualify for

Recognition as Adepts II°; if they did not meet this deadline, their affiliation was discontinued.

Two years was not only plenty of time for a reasonably-intelligent individual to develop basic

Black Magical skills (which II° Recognition signified); it was also amply sufficient for nonSetians

to realize that they were in an incomprehensible or otherwise unsatisfactory environment and

thus leave on their own. [This is a policy which the Temple has continued to the present day,

generally with mutual benefit.]

In contemplating this memoir I have wondered how best to remember and illustrate the

intellectual, initiatory, and organizational contributions and influence of those Setians in our

early years who shaped the Temple’s design, outlook, and overall flavor. I could cite personal

memories and anecdotes, of course, but this would be necessarily subjective and selective. What

I have decided to do instead is to append a selection of representative articles from the Temple’s

Scroll of Set newsletter. These will appear as appendices, and are grouped therein corresponding

to the chapter(s) of this memoir to which they align in time. See from these founding years

Appendices #14-46.

During these same four years I myself was driven by two primary interests where the Temple

was concerned: first to design and shape it into the most interesting, efficient, and above all

authentic Temple of Set I could envision; and second to complete the Utterance of my Word

Xeper. By 1979 I felt that I had accomplished both. The Temple had its Articles of Incorporation,

By-Laws, and federal & California state recognitions as a religious institution. The other

founding members, most essentially the Magistry and the Priesthood, understood how to

operate this machinery smoothly and cooperatively; everyone was enjoying the Temple and

initiatorily profiting from exposure to it.

Where *Xeper* was concerned, I felt that from my research into both its ancient Egyptian

meaning and its modern evolutionary implications, I had indeed explained it both to myself and

to others. In my personal case this culminated in my Ipsissimus initiation as recounted in the

previous chapter. In the case of other Setians, the influence of *Xeper* was wonderfully apparent

in the strength and diversity of the talent and genius the Temple was clearly awakening in them

[of which the aforementioned *Scroll* articles are just one example].

One of my core concerns was that the Temple of Set establish and maintain its organizational

identity beyond any individual; it was not to become a “personality cult” of myself or anyone

else. Further, its focus necessarily needed to be on each initiate’s experience, not on the

institution itself. Hence my often-invoked metaphor of the Temple of Set as “merely a toolbox”

whose tools were available to each Setian to assist in his own, unique initiatory adventure.

In keeping with this, I felt that it was important for the High Priesthood of Set to be

established as an office to be held by whichever Setian seemed to be most attuned to it at any

particular time. It should not be a lifetime enshrining of any person, as for instance the Roman

Catholic Papacy or Anton LaVey’s Satanic High Priesthood.

Thus in 1979 the time appeared right to commence this tradition, and it seemed to me that

the appropriate combination of dedication, energy, vision, and responsibility was most

conspicuously coalescent in Ronald K. Barrett, as is apparent from a biographical profile of him

in the May 1979 issue of the *Scroll of Set* (Appendix #46). Just as importantly, his own initiation

had taken the momentous step of transition from Magister Templi IV° to Magus V°.

On June 22, XII/1977 then-Priest Barrett had performed a GBM working atop his

mountaintop retreat which resulted in his awareness of and subsequent focus upon the Egyptian

hieroglyphic term *Xem* (the *Xem* Working: Appendix #47). In a 11/22/78 letter to the Priesthood

of Set I said:

In III°-65 I mentioned, among other things, that I had some further thinking to do about the

ritual held in San Francisco this past spring. At that ritual Magister Ronald K. Barrett formally

proposed a new concept embraced by the word *Xem*, roughly as follows:

Xem historically has been associated with the ancient Egyptians' identification of their

geographical territory, in much the same way as we use the terms "England", "France", etc. Barrett

suggests that this use of *Xem* is erroneous - that in fact it encompasses a far more complex

phenomenon. *Xem* as understood by Barrett refers to the collective initiatory environment of the

ancient priesthoods - sort of a "boundary of higher consciousness" rather than a political/

geographical border in the profane sense. *Xem* may have come into vulgar usage as a political/

geographic term, of course, and that would account for its subsequent translation by

archæologists.

But, continues Barrett, *Xem* possesses additional significance. It is subject to another

translation: "the Coming Into Being of the gods". In this sense it refers to "gods" in the precise

sense as "Forms" - derived not from the governing principles of the mechanical cosmos, but from

"expansions" and "specializations", one might say, of the primal non-natural Form of Set.

This, suggests Barrett, would account for the actual origin of the

ancient Egyptian gods other

than Set [and perhaps other than HarWer, and other than corrupted, imported gods such as

Osiris]. It is not so such that the earliest initiates of the Set-cult “fell away” from that cult to

worship natural-animal-headed conventional gods, but rather that certain initiates were able to

use their conceptual powers to **create** other Forms emphasizing certain characteristics. [This

would explain the somewhat mystifying statement in the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* that “all

other gods have been created by men”.]

The perfected magician, then, **actualizes his or her perfection by the magical act of**

creating a god or goddess. Presumably there are various ways in which this may be

undertaken. The act of creation may be **metaphorical** (i.e. the definition or introduction of an

evolutionary principle) or it may be **actual** (i.e. the magical genesis of a “higher self” possessing

the will and the characteristics of the god/goddess ... for example Aiwass, Aleister Crowley’s

“higher self”/ “Holy Guardian Angel”).

Magister Barrett had been considering aspects of this theory for some time prior to the spring

conclave in San Francisco. I can recall his discussing the basic concept with me during some of my

first visits to the Anubis Pylon headquarters in S.F. after the crisis events of 1975 had brought a

new focus upon and interest in the “gods of Egypt”. What happened at the spring 1978 conclave

was actually twofold: First Barrett felt that the hypothesis had been sufficiently developed to merit

its being formally enunciated as a comprehensive theory, and secondly the magical workings of

the conclave ritual seemed to substantiate, if not altogether confirm the theory.

A west coast III° + meeting was scheduled for 11/11-12 in San Francisco and Oakland. A few

days prior to the meeting, Barrett inquired if he could meet with me in Santa Barbara to discuss

an urgent matter. He was, as it turned out, “obsessed” with the theory, feeling a consuming need

to explain it and promulgate it. He asked my interpretation of this obsession and my advice

concerning it.

I suggested to him that the elements of his theory, the dynamic essence of his Utterance of the

Word *Xem*, and his compulsion to implement that Word were characteristics of a Magus V°.

Consider the following quote from Aleister Crowley’s *Magick*:

The essential characteristic of the Grade is that its possessor utters a Creative Magical

Word, which transforms the planet on which he lives by the installation of new officers to

preside over its initiation. This can take place only at an “Equinox of the Gods” at the end

of an “Æon”; that is, when the secret formula which expresses the Law of its action

becomes outworn and useless to its further development ...

This does not mean that only one man can attain this Grade in any one Æon, so far as

the Order is concerned. A man can make personal progress equivalent to that of a "Word of

an Æon"; but he will identify himself with the current word and exert his will to establish

it, lest he conflict with the work of the Magus who uttered the Word of the Æon in which

he is living.

The Magus is preeminently the Master of Magick, that is, his will is entirely free from

internal diversion or external opposition; His work is to create a new Universe in

accordance with His Will. He is the Master of the Law of Change (*Anicca*).

Consider further this quote from *Liber B vel Magi:*

Let Him beware of abstinence from action. For the Curse of His grade is that He must

speak Truth, that the Falsehood thereof may enslave the souls of men. Let HIM then utter

that without fear, that the Law may be fulfilled. And according to His Original Nature will

that law be shapen, so that one may declare gentleness and quietness, being an Hindu; and

another fierceness and servility, being a Jew; and yet another ardour and manliness, being

an Arab. Yet this matter toucheth the mystery of Incarnation, and is not here to be

declared.

Now the grade of a Magister teacheth the Mystery of Sorrow, and the grade of a Magus

the Mystery of Change, and the grade of Ipsissimus the Mystery of Selflessness, which is

also called the Mystery of Pan.

Let the Magus then contemplate each in turn, raising it to the ultimate power of

infinity. Wherein Sorrow is Joy, and Change is Stability, and Selflessness is Self. For the

interplay of the parts hath no action upon the whole. And this contemplation shall be

performed not by simple meditation - how much less then by reason? - but by the method

which shall have been given unto Him in His initiation to the Grade ...

In ritual I explored Barrett's state of being by means of the Fourth Æthyr of *The Vision and*

The Voice and by means of IV° analysis, for:

By a Magus is this writing made known through the mind of a Magister. The one

uttereth clearly, and the other understandeth; yet the Word is falsehood, and the

Understanding darkness. And this saying is Of All Truth.

Nevertheless it is written; for there be times of darkness, and this as a lamp therein.

It was then evident to me that Ronald Barrett had in fact Come Into Being as a Magus V° in

the precise sense. He and I discussed some of the implications of this:

For one thing, it seemed that his V° was somewhere "in between" the alternatives described by

Crowley. His Word was more an **evolution** of *Xeper* than a destruction and replacement of it. So

it did not seem to either of us that the Æon of Set was to be superseded, but rather that it was to

commence a more elaborate stage of development. Nor did Barrett's magical progress simply

equate to mine [per Crowley's second alternative]; he was not merely identifying himself with

Xeper but rather Uttering a new Word containing implications beyond *Xeper*.

Then there were issues bearing directly upon the Temple of Set. Per the By-Laws a Magus V°

must be confirmed as such by unanimous approval of the Council of Nine. The intent of this

provision, as with those relating to other degrees, was to establish orderly analysis of the degree-

progress and to safeguard the degree-system against possible abuse.

The defect of the V° provision, as is also the case with the IV° provision, is that - at least in the

Temple's formative years - the Council of Nine includes III° as well as IV° Councillors. The IV° is

distinguished from the III° by [among other things] the quality of **Understanding** in a magical

sense ... being a sort of total awareness of the substance and implications of a Word. Hence a IV°

Councillor may consider a IV° or V° nomination according to this sort of awareness, while a III°

Councillor considers the same question according to inductive/ deductive reasoning, i.e.

consideration of specific propositions and issues formulated during the Council's discussion of the

nomination.

My original intention was to communicate my V° nomination for

Barrett to the Council of

Nine in advance of any general discussion within the III° + as a whole. This notion was preempted

by the events of the III° + ritual at the 11/11-12 meeting in San Francisco, wherein Set came forth

to declare the Coming Into Being of Barrett as a Magus.

The events of that ritual have since been discussed by many of the Priesthood who were there,

and so it seems appropriate to make the formal nomination of Ronald K. Barrett for the V° to the

Council per this III° letter. Perhaps this is also correct from a magical standpoint, since the

confirmation of a Magus is a development which will have a major impact upon the entire

Priesthood and Temple of Set.

How may the Council evaluate such a nomination? The salient characteristics of a Magus have

been defined both here and in other documents of the Temple - such as the "*Book of Coming*

Forth by Night Analysis & Commentary". Concerning the 11/11 ritual, Councillors may wish to ask

the impressions of those who were present: Seago, Sinclair, Sarris, Reynolds, Thomas, Waters,

Moffatt, and Zappitelli. And of course the comments of Barrett himself may be sought by any

Councillor who wishes to do so. [I understand that Barrett will be preparing a statement of his

own for consideration by the Council.]

Unquestionably this is an event of major importance for the Temple and for the Æon. It is also

the first occasion on which we have been able to use the deliberative processes for a V° evaluation

established under our By-Laws. I am looking forward with the utmost interest to the outcome.

On the South Solstice of 1978 the Council of Nine voted its unanimous approval of Barrett's

Recognition as a Magus V°. During the following year he refined his Word into a series of five

"Keys" comprising what he entitled the *Book of Opening the Way* (Appendices #48-52). Despite

this effort, *Xem* would continue to be criticized for its vagueness as a magical concept, though its

essential meaning never seemed all that mysterious [or impractical] to me (Appendix #53).

As discussed in Chapter #5, it was subsequent to the 11/11/78 Priesthood working that I came

to realize that my own Task as a Magus had been fulfilled, and that final initiation to the as-yet-

nonformalized degree of Ipsissimus now faced me. Simultaneously came a conviction that both

Barrett's V° Task and my henceforth initiatory focus necessitated the conveyance of the High

Priesthood of Set. On the Ides of March 1979, when I took the Oath of Ipsissimus, I wrote to the

Priesthood:

From Magus Ronald K. Barrett I have just received a copy of the first two Keys of the *Book of*

Opening the Way. I have considered them carefully and would now like to share my thoughts with

the Priesthood of Set.

From an account by Priestesses Linda Reynolds and Alexandra Sarris

of the Working of

November 11, 1978:

Magus Aquino raised his hood and moved before the pentagram, then turned to the

Priesthood. Before he spoke, it was clear to all that Set had manifested himself in his High

Priest and Magus. In fact Magus Aquino's face was no longer apparent - there was a

darkness within the cowl [later Anubis said that he saw a brief something changing within,

but wasn't sure what]. He turned and very slowly looked at every one of the Priesthood.

Set: "Never before have I stood in the midst of such majesty. The majesty of these

young gods and goddesses. You are the Children of Set ... [and he listed the names]. I have

lived through the pain of the Æon of Horus, and the pain and pleasure of the Age of Satan,

and this is my Æon ... has passed - a bridge ... For my Temple that was dust (?) is dormant

(?) no longer. Before me I see the Black Jackal, he who has opened the way for me ... and

from the desert ... he who lurked ... And I have raised him up so that all may see."

What we can remember is the gist of what was said: that first Set spoke as Set and

talked about the æons and the Coming Into Being of Anubis, who was the Opener of the

Way, and hinted at the coming of something more ...

But it was Ra-en-Set who proclaimed the words that he would nominate Ronald K.

Barrett to the Council of Nine as Magus V°. And the new Word is *Xem*. He also said that

"the body is weary" and swayed perilously as if he would fall. "My limbs are brought back

together and I am made whole ..." He was supported immediately by NeXbet and Sesheta,

who created a circle of energy around him. As he spoke, the Priesthood stretched out their

arms to send him energy, and then touched and hugged him with support, care, and great

love.When Set came to Anubis and put his hands around Anubis' head and called him by

the name of Anubis, [he said]: "... What you have seen and what I have spoken ... [a

reference to *Xem*] ... Upon your head, then, do I place my charge. Do not let what has

happened to them (the ancient Priesthood) happen again. Do not let Anubis minister to

the dead ..."

Then Anubis spoke to the Priesthood: "Two lands ... invisible world ... world of

darkness and the world of light ... *Xem* being fused ... the time of the great fusion. It is

rightly written that this is the time of the Coming Into Being of the gods ..."

During the speech Medu felt the gathering of the entities to share in this event, and

within their midst, like a pillar of black, was Set, sharing with his Children this night.

Anubis also had a sense of there being more than the Priesthood in the room. He also felt a

sense of “Here we go ... again!”, and the feeling was optimistic - that after 5,000 years we

have the chance to make it.

Later Ra-en-Set said that if this be truth, let it be known. At that point NeXbet sensed

before her the grey lady of Maat with her feather, and NeXbet stepped forward and said,

“Give me your hand,” and Ra-en-Set raised his left hand. She took it and said that Maat

was before him and held a feather for him, for his words were true. Then Ra-en-Set and

Anubis clasped hands and stared into one another’s eyes. Anubis had the distinct feeling of

being able to speak to Magus Aquino - one Magus to another - on the big things - they have

their own level of communication - like a father and grown-up son.

And the scales were balanced.

Anubis turned to the pentagram and said, “The gates have been opened, and they shall

not be closed again!”

I myself am not in a position to add to this account of that ritual, because my mind rejects

analysis of it, just as it rejects analysis of other rituals in which Ra-en-Set Came Into Being. But I

do remember quite well the moment of placing my hands on the shoulders of Anubis, because it

was as though some unique “energizing force” passed from myself to him.

Since that time I have felt oddly “uneasy”, as though there were now a magical imbalance in

the Temple of Set, and today, as I read the Keys of the *Book of Opening the Way*, I finally

Understood why.

I quote from my letter to the II° + membership of the Church of Satan (6/19/1975):

The ancient Chinese once said that the Emperor obviously held the “Mandate of

Heaven” to retain his throne as long as all was well with the country. If things were not

going well, it would be assumed that the Mandate had been lost, and thus it became

acceptable to replace the Emperor without insulting the throne or the country. As I employ

the term, the “Infernal Mandate” is carried by whoever best represents the true will of the

Prince of Darkness at a given point of time. The new organization will be designed so that

it will be possible to reassign this Mandate where it is believed appropriate without

scrapping the entire organizational machinery.

After reading and considering the initial Keys of the *Book of Opening the Way*, I am convinced

that the “Infernal Mandate” has now passed. Accordingly I now formally request the Council of

Nine to entrust the High Priesthood of Set to Magus Ronald K. Barrett. *Xeper* has been Uttered,

and it is now the time for the Coming Into Being of *Xem*.

As High Priest since June of 1975, I have seen the Temple of Set grow from magical and

philosophical infancy to become an institution the like of which has not been known on this planet

since the days of ancient *Xem*. We have explored the potential of our kind to an almost

inconceivable degree, and we have Understood the forces of existence in this universe with crystal

clarity. We have taken the pitiful fragments of the ancient knowledge which came to us through

the crucible of the Age of Satan, and we have reforged them, like Siegfried's sword, into the

essence of their original power. We have also come to know one another with extraordinary

empathy, seeing past the vehicles of our Earthly flesh to the Black Flame that burns within us. All

these things and more we have done, and now they have brought us to this new Opening of the

Way.

What are my own feelings upon this realization? I sense only a quiet pleasure at having, as I

Understand it, fulfilled the Task given to me by the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*; and a great

anticipation concerning what will now Come Into Being. I will of course remain an active Initiate

and will do what may be within my power to further the Æon; and no doubt you will probably

continue to be pestered from time to time with my singular opinions. But the impetus of the Æon

of Set is now in the care of another Magus. And so another magical question seems to be

answered; for I suspect that the “nineteen parts of the Word” which eluded me are now

commencing to Come Into Being as the *Book of Opening the Way*. 50

To all of you, the Priesthood of Set, there are no words that I can say to express the love and

respect in which I hold you, as well as the honor it has been to serve as High Priest. We shall

Understand such things, I am certain, without further comment.

I, Ra-en-Set, lift up my voice and swear that I myself have been brought hither by Set, the

Prince of Darkness. After that I had attained unto the Knowledge and Conversation of him by

virtue of the *Diabolicon*, and of this Ritual that I bestow upon Setians my fellows, and most of his

great love that he beareth to me, yea, verily, he led me to the Age of Satan; he bade me fling away

all that I had and all that I was; and he forsook me in that Hour. But when I came beyond the Age

of Satan, to be reborn on the North Solstice X, then came he unto me by the *Book of Coming*

Forth by Night.

Also he made me a Magus, speaking through *Xeper*, the Word of the new æon, the *Æon* of Set.

Thus he fulfilled my will to bring full freedom to his Gifted race.

Yea, he wrought also in me a work of wonder beyond this, but in this matter I as sworn to hold

my peace. 51

The Council of Nine and Priesthood of Set subsequently took up the question of a formal VI°

within the initiatory structure of the Temple of Set, decided that it

was appropriate52 , and

amended the By-Laws accordingly. Both the succession of the High Priesthood and my formal

50 In this I was mistaken on two counts: The *Book of Opening the Way* ceased with five Keys, and I subsequently

undertook and completed the *Word of Set* working based on John Dee's original "Enochian" manuscripts.

51 These last three paragraphs were inspired by a reflection of Aleister Crowley's concerning his own "knowledge and

conversation of his Holy Guardian Angel [Aiwass]" and the initiatory adventure which ultimately led him to his own

initiation as an Ipsissimus (10) = [1]. It is appended to *Liber Samekh* in the 1973-restored edition of *Magick*.

52 Insofar as the Understanding of the Masters of the Temple extends to the existence, if not the essence of

Ipsissimus.

VI° Recognition occurred at the Temple of Set's first International Conclave (Set-1), held that

summer as recounted in the August 1979 *Scroll of Set*:

Set-I International Conclave is Accomplished

- by Constance Moffatt II°

"A major step in the evolution of the Temple of Set as a whole, something that has been a long

time in the coming, something we all felt instinctively was vital, has been accomplished," stated

Magus Ronald K. Barrett, High Priest, during an interview following the conclusion of Set-I, held

in Windsor, Canada July 12-15, 1979.

“A bond has been established in helping to connect all of the Elect so that there is no

separation of purpose and direction. In the two workings I felt a very strong drive to unite the

Order of Set (III° +) with an essence that we all knew was there, but when geographically

separated seems difficult at times to feel,” continued Magus Barrett. “During the Conclave

working there was a new bond of understanding extended from the Order of Set to the lay

membership. The obvious advantages of the Conclave are the getting to know the different

Initiates on an individual basis. Thus when we see a name in the Scroll or in correspondence, we

can connect the essence of the individual to that name. A deeper sense of trust and love, that could

not have occurred by any other means than the Conclave, has begun due to the personal contact

and interrelations with our Setian brothers and sisters.

“Another major advantage of the Conclave is the fact that we have witnessed the Temple of Set

function on both its administrative and magical raison d’etre. The lay membership has been able

to see the various aspects of the Order of Set in motion, such as the Council of Nine and the High

Priest determining policy change in keeping with the growth of the Æon, as well as observing the

Recognition - the Coming into Being of a new Master of the Temple, Magister Lynn Norton.

“Initiates, normally scattered and isolated throughout various parts of the continent, had the

opportunity to experience, in rituals, the essential, magical core which is, of course,

communication with the Set-entity. This witnessing should open doorways for them into their

own magical evolution in terms of personal relationship with the Prince of Darkness.

“The conclave had a variety of types of experiences, ranging from highly-charged ritual

atmosphere to fun & laughter and everything in between. It is really too soon to be able to assess

any but the obvious effects that Set-I will have upon the Temple of Set. Perhaps at this early stage,

though, it can be summarized by saying: ‘Set, we have gathered your great nobles unto you, and

we have felt you pass near to us.’”

———————

The Ipsissimus Has Evolved

- by Robert H. Moffatt III°

What is an Ipsissimus? The *Collins Latin Gem Dictionary* translates it as “His very own self”.

The ending “-issimus” is grammatically the superlative degree of “ipse”, meaning “self”; or closer

to Latin thought “he who is himself the most”. There is no concise English equivalent to

“Ipsissimus”. The Temple of Set, however, has Recognized that Michael A. Aquino is an

Ipsissimus.

High Priest Ronald K. Barrett hailed this Recognition under the stars on the 30th of June XIV

as a highlight to the III° + working at XemSet, and again at the

opening of the Set-I Conclave by

adding to the costume of the Exalted Man a medallion made of a disc of solid gold with a sterling

silver pentagram prominently overlaid. The beautiful piece was paid for by the Priesthood and

remains the property of the Temple of Set.

These events were charged with an indescribable degree of emotion that could not be

augmented by any amount of fanfare or ceremony.

The Ipsissimus was obviously deeply touched and at a loss for words to express his emotions at

the moment. “There are some experiences which cannot be described in words,” he said slowly.

“This medallion is not only ceremonial. It is not beautiful solely for the metals and craft which

compose it. It is meaningful because of the knowledge and the love with which the Temple has

seen fit to bestow it. I will never cease to respect it thus, and after my time has passed, it will be

returned to the Temple. The very ability of the Temple to Recognize such a degree evidences our

evolution since 1975. The work of the Temple has been like the splitting of the atom, the opening

of a whole sphere of existence, an arrival at intellectual activity on the level of Plato.

“For myself the degree of Ipsissimus is an initiatory state of being that is very personal. No

matter what you do, no matter where you go, whom you know, what success or failure you

experience - that part of yourself you bring out through being, becoming - the thing called

'initiation' - makes a difference in you, not as an animal but as an intelligence unique in the

universe.

"This is true divinity. The recognition of this makes us a new breed of atomic scientist. But this

is not like a new scientific discovery. This Æon is alive!"

Magus Barrett read the new By-Laws providing for the VI° and told of one of his workings

several months back when he heard Michael Aquino hailed as "the Exalted One, to be cherished -

a living symbol for us all".

Before the medallion presentation and after the High Priest had opened the conclave,

Ipsissimus Aquino had remarked that: "The changeover of High Priests highlights this conclave.

What comes out here will be a foundation for the future. John Fowles' reaction to the cliché 'No

man is an island', was 'Rubbish! Each man is an island.' We are like returning comets, gods and

goddesses, come hence to drink of each other's universes in more vivid color. Here there are no

leaders, no followers. Everyone is a star."

Ronald K. Barrett's High Priesthood, which was to continue for the next two years, was one of

the most intensive, experimental, inspiring, and controversial experiences for the Temple of Set.

This revolved around two passions of his: the exploration and promulgation of his V° Word *Xem*

and the climate of initiatory dedication and advancement within the Temple. He saw the two as

interrelated, and his own office as High Priest a responsibility to advance them.

Barrett would later be [and still is] criticized for being intolerant and authoritarian: a High

Priest who used his office to create and enforce a sort of “initiatory totalitarianism” in contrast to

the individual-initiative climate characterizing the Temple previously and subsequently. I think

this misses the mark in two respects. First, his intentions were altruistic and heartfelt; he wished

nothing but to improve the Temple and the initiatory validity of each Setian. Secondly, the

Temple was then, as it continues today, very much an experiment-in-progress. At any one

moment one could not say how the current mix of ideas might work out, and the general practice

has been to give them their best opportunity for success. So it was with both Barrett and the

other Setians around him.

Barrett’s first major policy change was announced in the April 1980 *Scroll of Set*:

Lay Member Renewals Now Require Endorsement

- by Ronald K. Barrett V°, High Priest

If you are I° or II°, you may have noticed recently an attempt by your III° pyramid officials to

open communications with you. So that you will better understand why, let’s take a look at the

Temple of Set communications pyramid and its functions.

The pyramid came into being as the answer to the question of how the Temple of Set can best

serve the needs of Initiates both personally and comprehensively. While this does not mean that

we have [even remotely] adopted a spoon-feeding technique of initiation, it does mean that

initiatory guidance will be available on a more individual basis to those Initiates who truly apply

themselves.

Through the pyramid the I°/II° have direct access to a Priest or Priestess of Set who is willing

and able to assist them in finding answers to questions about magic, the Temple of Set, etc. The

Temple will also have a better perspective of the entire membership [even isolated Setians], and

this will help in making due Recognitions and in assessing the progress and needs of aspiring

Setians. The design of the pyramid ensures that everyone is heard and informed according to his/

her initiatory status and ability to understand. And of course the pyramid will necessarily clear out

the deadwood.

The pyramid requires the cooperation and participation of every member of the Temple of Set.

For a III° to assist or guide any lay Initiate, there must be some communication between the two.

It must be realized, however, that it is the responsibility of the I°/II° to initiate and then maintain

this communication. The Priesthood is quite willing to respond, but no III° is going to waste

valuable time and effort trying to prod the complacent or apathetic. Those who receive guidance

from the Priesthood will be those who are actively working toward magical evolution.

It is assumed that every Setian desires to aspire to the heights of his initiatory potential, or he

would not be a member of the Temple of Set. Not one of our Setian degrees is Recognized as the

end of magical evolution, and therefore any sense of “having made it” is false. The end of any

phase of initiation is merely the beginning of another, thus “creation and change are exalted above

rest and preservation”.

If one understands this, one should also understand why inactivity is intolerable in the

Temple. To allow an individual who has succumbed to the siren of contentment and do-

nothingness to enter or to remain among us would indicate that the Temple of Set had placed

emphasis on quantity rather than quality, and that most certainly is not true. Instead it is most

important to know and understand the above, because the pyramid is now in effect, and with the

pyramid comes the elimination of any trace of stasis together with the requirement of

demonstrated effort to evolve.

This does not mean that all Setians must become gods overnight, or that flags should be waved

every time a magical insight is had, or that a letter a day keeps an expulsion away. It **does** mean

that every Initiate must actively engage in *Xeper*, and to do so will

require some occasional [at

least] guidance, point of reference, and higher perspective which are available from the

Priesthood.

Keeping in mind that magical/philosophical discussion is filtered as appropriate to each

degree, it seems only logical that all Setian Initiates should desire Recognition if for no other

reason than to have access to higher information. As stated above, the desire for personal

evolution is already assumed through affiliation with the Temple. To make a true Recognition,

however, the Priesthood must have an ongoing knowledge of the evolutionary progress of the

individual concerned, and this can occur only through contact whether that contact is through

letters, Pylon meetings, or private discussions.

A I° has basically two years to Become and to be Recognized Adept II°. This means that within

two years the I° must become demonstrably knowledgeable and skilled in the White magical arts.

If valid reasons or circumstances prevent a I° from accomplishing this, then an extension beyond

the two-year period **may** be granted [pending approval of the III° pyramid official], but this will

be a true exception and not the rule. Again, for Recognition to occur, the Setian I° will have to

establish an initiatory relationship with his/her pyramid officials.

A variation on this same principle applies to II°s. Recognition to the III ° depends initially

upon two factors: (1) the individual Adept's evolutionary quest into the Realm of Darkness, and

(2) the Gift of Set being given to the magician by Set himself. There is no time-factor imposed

during which this must occur, however, so a magician can remain II° indefinitely and still remain

a member of the Temple of Set, so long as that same magician can demonstrate that he/she is

working toward continuous magical growth and mental evolution (*Xeper*). The keys here are will,

aspiration, and application. Remember that a magician is one who works magic, and if one is not

working magic, then one is not a magician/Adept. In short, the red medallion is no license to

relax.

Only a Master of the Temple can Recognize that an Adept has "Come Into Being" as a Priest or

Priestess of Set, but II°s are assigned to III°s (not IV°s) in the pyramid. The only way that an

Adept can be Recognized to the Priesthood is through the intuitive recommendation of the III°s to

their own assigned Masters. It only makes sense that if the II° does not communicate what is

going on inside of him to his III°s, it is highly unlikely that any evolution is going to be noticed.

Another reason for I°/II°s to keep in touch with the Priesthood and to remain active in their

efforts to evolve concerns the annual renewal. Let it be emphasized again that the Temple of Set is

progressive, evolutionary, and antistatic. All Setians who are active-status members of the Temple

are truly “active-status” or they are **not** Setian. Everyone who joins the Temple of Set joins it

100%, and that includes the Temple’s creative and changing motion. Anyone who has joined for

“kicks”, or for social reasons, or on a whim has joined for the wrong reasons. No one will remain a

member who does nothing, and if there are any among us who have joined for the wrong reasons,

or are doing nothing, the pyramid will very soon remedy that. This is because, with the now

effective pyramid, the I°/II° will be expected to produce appropriate evidence that they are

aspiring to *Xeper* forthrightly, or they will not be permitted to renew their membership. The

Executive Director has been instructed that, effective immediately, renewals will be accepted from

I°/II°s only when that renewal has been endorsed by the representative pyramid officials. Special

slips will be sent to the appropriate officials at the same time that the gold renewal slips are

mailed to the members whose renewal time is approaching.

Obviously any official who is asked to endorse a I°/II° is going to want some valid evidence

that the member is worthy of that endorsement, but it will be the responsibility of the lay member

to provide that evidence - **not** the responsibility of the official to “dig it out”.

Another important point: When an official of the Temple takes the time and effort to sit down

and write out a letter that requires an answer, it’s safe to say that the

letter was not written just

because someone needed some finger exercises. There is a perfectly good reason for such a letter,

even though it may not be immediately apparent to the recipient. That being the case, all lay

members will be expected to respond to correspondence which they receive from Temple officials.

It's the courteous, respectful, and responsible thing to do.

To summarize, let me say that the pyramid is a tool of great precision and utility to the Temple

of Set and its entire membership. It ensures that every Setian has access to as much initiatory

guidance as he or she can possibly use. Through its use, the pyramid gives the Temple an accurate

view of itself so that no strength or weakness goes unnoticed. The pyramid also serves to filter out

the lazy, the idly curious, the incompetent, and any other kind of deadwood. In this way we may

look upon each other with a profound pride and respect in knowing that every Setian among us is

aiding in the forward thrust toward *Xem*.

Any questions that there might be regarding the Temple of Set pyramid should be directed to

your assigned officials, who will be only glad to answer them for you.

I think the pyramid is a great thing, and I think you're going to appreciate it too - so "go for it"!

Xeper ir Xem.

The "pyramid" to which Barrett refers here had originally been conceived by Executive

Director William F. Murray as a way of ensuring efficient initiatory

dialogue within the Temple.

The idea was that each Setian would be assigned one contact of a higher degree and two or more

of a lower degree. They would be expected to keep at least occasionally in touch, and to serve as

“first resources” in cases of questions & answers on Temple matters. Bill’s good intentions and

meticulous administration of the pyramid notwithstanding, it was not much utilized in an

atmosphere in which individuals went right on communicating [or not] as the direction and

mood moved them.

By tying annual membership renewal to endorsement by one’s pyramid-senior, Barrett

sought to force it to function as intended, force each junior-contact to do and be able to report

some personal initiatory progress, and force each senior-contact to devote some attention and

guidance to juniors. Not an unreasonable or oppressive set of expectations, it seemed; what no

one anticipated was the lack of response to it in practice, which immediately began to reduce

membership renewals.

Also evident in this article, though not generally perceived at the time, was Barrett’s re-

conceptualization of all of the initiatory degrees as a continuous I°-V° “ladder” up which each

Setian was expected to climb. Pre- and post-Barrett the I° was considered to be an initial-

exposure/mutual evaluation degree, the II° a recognition of full suitability as a Setian and

competence as an adept Black Magician, the III° as a uniquely-occurring metaphysical

relationship between some Setians and Set, and the IV°+ as specialized variations of the III°.

Under this original system, it was expected that most Setians attaining the II° would remain

there indefinitely, with of course limitless opportunity to exercise and extend their “Adeptitude”.

Barrett saw this as simply too vague; he wanted a more structured measurement of personal

progress, so he chose to redefine the numbered-degrees accordingly. Such a redefinition was not

formally announced as such, nor clearly/uniformly perceived throughout the Temple then or

later in Barrett’s tenure, and this confusion proved to be at the root of much of the later stress.

On July 19-22, 1980 the Temple’s Second International Conclave (Set-2) was convoked atop

the XemSet mountain in northern California. Every bit as productive and popular as its

predecessor, Set-2 generated several noteworthy articles in the August 1980 *Scroll of Set*,

reprinted here as Appendix #54. But it was a year later, at the Set-3 Conclave in San Francisco,

that Barrett introduced his new membership and degree policies. As recounted in the July 1981

Scroll of Set:

AlXemical Definition of Setian I° & II° to be Ensured

- by Ronald K. Barrett V°, High Priest

Up to now the qualifications for recognizing a Setian I° to Adept II° have been somewhat

nonspecific. They were primarily based on the Temple's endorsement of a Setian's membership by

observing individual motivation as well as through observed "Elect" potential.

In my efforts to guide the Elect to *Xem*, I have become increasingly aware that the magical

expertise and understanding of several II°s has been insufficient to comprehend/accomplish the

work which lies ahead of us. Awhile back and in response to this awareness, I introduced

"Definition by Degree", which redefined each of our initiatory degrees as appropriate to *Xeper ir*

Xem. Response to this was positive, as was response to the reactivation and emphasis on the

Pyramid Project.

Now that these are basically understood and active, it is time to formalize an actual policy to

ensure proper magical initiation and evolution appropriate to the work under the current magical

formula. This new policy is designed to maximize the magical education and skill of each I°

initiate to the peaks of individual potential and ability. This policy (henceforward incorporated

into and called "Definition by Degree") enforces and ensures the alXemical definition and purpose

of Setian I° and Adept II°.

Setian I°:

The individual holding the I° is one who has entered the Setian Temple of initiation. A Setian

of any Temple degree is an individual who is aspiring to the knowledge of Set and to becoming a

god in his own right, and the I° is at the first stage of this process which is called *Xeper ir Xem*.

This process, however, will not just "occur". It must be willed, and the degree of will used will

determine both the rate and extent of this unique evolution. The will of which I write is **magical**

will, and is not merely wishful thinking, ambition, or even aspiration by themselves. It is a force

of immense power, and its mastery must make of it an exacting science as well as a fine art.

The I° is a phase of initiation during which the Setian must learn magical theory and practice,

must gain a wide spectrum of knowledge and influence in as many areas of his life as possible, and

must become a true master of will. When the Setian has become such a master of the magical will,

he will have an understanding of the Word of the Æon of Horus, which is "*Thelema*". He will

embody the principle of "Do What Thou Wilt", for this is the whole of the law of the I°.

Adept II°:

One who has mastered the magical will is then qualified to be Recognized as Adept: one who is

an expert, a master of an art. A master of a specific art is in a position to apply his skills and

understanding in a multitude of ways including experimentation, invention of new techniques,

exploration etc.; and all because he has the necessary knowledge of/ ability to use the principles

involved.

A true master is far more than a technician; he is an artist. Anyone can learn to paint-by-

numbers but only a true artist can produce a masterpiece. This is no less true in the magical arts,

and for this reason the Word governing the II° is “Indulgence” - just as it was the Word of the Age

of Satan. Only a master can fully indulge in the whole of whatever art he has mastered, and only

an Adept can fully indulge in the magical arts. Further only those who are able to explore the far

reaches of magic are able to open the Gates to the Dark Realm and to fully master the Black

Flame.

Army of Adepts:

The Army of Adepts will be composed of masters of the magical arts (II°s) in the first stages of

guardianship of the *Æon* of Set and the oncoming *Æon* of *Xem*. It is these Adepts who will wield

their skills to protect the new ones who are even now coming into being.

This is not an army in the normal sense of the word, but rather a force of magical beings

united in the purpose of guarding the higher aspects of initiation. None may pass by without

Becoming.

Revised Qualifications for Recognition to II°

- by Ronald K. Barrett V°, High Priest

The new policy: To make a reality of all this, it is necessary to revise the qualifications for

Recognition to II°.

The first new qualification will come through a required reading list. This list is made up of

carefully-selected books which will offer the Initiate a wide variety of magical information. The

information acquired from this list is not only useful but necessary for successful initiation within

the Temple of Set. For this reason and effective immediately, no Recognition of a Setian I° as an

Adept II° will occur prior to the Setian's having read and digested every book on the list.

In addition to the required reading list, a recommended reading list has also been prepared to

cover a wide range of subjects which either directly or indirectly aids magical initiation. This list is

intended to complement the required list while leaving the I° the option to pursue the varied

subjects according to individual interest and initiative.

Since the recommended list contains no claim to being a complete list covering all subjects of

interest, Setians should feel free to extend their studies beyond the list. If a text not included on

either list is found to be of particular worth, I suggest that the text(s) be brought to the attention

of the entire Temple of Set via the *Scroll* or through Pyramid officials.

Testing will also become a necessary part of the new II° Recognition process, and will cover

both information that the Setian should gain and practical application of that acquired knowledge.

Here is how the testing and resulting Recognition will work:

When a Setian I° is felt to be adept in the magical arts, an appropriate official will discuss the

matter of administering the test with the I°. If the Setian desires to take the test, it will be

arranged. Testing will not be administered under any circumstances until the entire required

reading list has been studied by the I°.

Under the new policy the I° may also present himself to an appropriate Pyramid official and

ask that the test be administered. The decision on the request will be made by the official.

The written test will be extensive and will include (a) multiple-choice questions, (b) essay

questions, (c) fill-in questions, and (d) essays on various subjects. The test will contain mostly

questions taken from the required reading list, but it will also contain questions taken from books

on the recommended list - at least one question from each book. This will be primarily to

determine the personal initiative of the I° to study/learn beyond just what is required.

Only when the Setian passes the written test will the next part of the test be taken. The second

part of the test will be to determine the Setian's practical magical abilities, and will include written

construction of at least three different types of rituals and actual performance of no fewer than

two of these rituals in the presence of an evaluating Temple official. The official will judge (a) the

overall effectiveness of the ritual, (b) the display of magical expertise, and (c) the actual

application of valid magical principles. The written rituals will be submitted prior to performance

of the rituals for evaluation, and so the official will know what to expect.

A fee of $10 will be charged for testing to cover the expense of the paperwork involved and to

cover the cost of the red Pentagram of Set medallion. If the test is failed, the cost of the medallion

will be returned. Copies of the test will be mailed by the Setian to both Pyramid officials for

grading.

When the test has been passed, the testing official(s) will make the final decision of

Recognition based on the personal qualities of the Setian, including attitude, initiative, lifestyle,

etc. Following this final evaluation, the Recognition may occur as prescribed in the Temple By-

Laws.

The new Adept II° will then be truly qualified to proudly bear the title of Adept, master of the

magical arts, and to wear the red Pentagram medallion as exactly what it symbolizes. The Adept

will also then be ready to begin the next phase of personal initiation.

To be fair, and in order that the II° does not have a double standard, all currently-Recognized

II°s will likewise be expected to undergo this testing process [without fee]. Although this new

program is in effect as of this date, currently-Recognized II°s will be given until the South Solstice

XVI to prepare for testing, which must occur at some time between then and the Vernal Equinox

XVII. Adepts who pass the test will bear a new mark of distinction and honor. Those who do not

pass, or who do not take the test by the deadline date, will be returned to I° status until such time

as they can meet the qualifications prescribed in this new policy.

Testing already Recognized II°s is also necessary because of the next part of the new policy,

which involves the Pyramid Project.

Immediately after Vernal Equinox XVII, the Executive Director will release a new Pyramid

roster which will assign II°s as magical advisors to I°s. This advisory capacity is only for the sake

of assisting I° Initiates to become adept in magic, and carries no official Temple of Set authority. It

does, however, give an opportunity for II°s to assume some degree of responsibility, and to

exercise the full scope of their knowledge. From this perspective it now becomes quite feasible for

II°s to form and lead Pylons [as prescribed in the *Ruby Tablet of Set*] if a II° desires to do so.

If a II° magical advisor feels one of his assigned I°s has become qualified for possible II°

Recognition, the II° should bring the Setian to the attention of the appropriate official, who will in

turn determine whether or not to administer the testing process. Magical advisors might also be

consulted by the Pyramid officials in making annual renewal evaluations of I°s.

Consider with me now the caliber of magical Initiates that shall result from this new policy,

tough as it is. We can easily predict a new measure of strength rising into the Elect of Set which

will benefit us all in our work to *Xeper ir Xem*. Magical evolution is the fundamental process

through which *Xeper* can occur. We shall behold upon the path to *Xem* magicians whose beings

are magical - not merely beings who do rituals. Of such beings are the seeds of the gods to come.

Listen. Listen very closely, and you can hear them breathing all around you.

In theory there was something to be said for Barrett's new approach to II° Recognition. He

was concerned that [at least some] Setians I° were being Recognized as Adepts II° without really

becoming knowledgeable in and accomplished in the application of magic. By instituting a

literary study curriculum (Appendix #57) and requiring the passing of a written test based upon

it, he thought to solve this problem. But complications and confusion soon arose. Many of the

required [and recommended] books were expensive and/or unavailable. The books were not

mutually-supportive and, with few exceptions, were not designed as instructional textbooks.

Some were scientific and carefully-argued; others were speculative and occasionally incoherent.

Hence a Setian I°, even if managing to acquire the required books, was at something of a loss

as to what he was expected to glean from them, much less to apply it. Existing Adepts or Priests

would not be of much help here, since none of them had been subjected to this new curriculum

or passed a test based upon it.

Barrett's solution to these impediments was characteristically methodical: He would grade all

of the tests himself, and he would require existing Adepts II° to take the test as well. If they failed

it, they would be returned to Iůntil they passed it.

Over the next eight months no one passed the test. On 3/8/1982 a frustrated Barrett wrote to

the Priesthood:

There seems to be some confusion within the Priesthood regarding the test, and so I would

like to take some time to clear up the confusion so that we can get back to the reason for its

existence, i.e. magical initiation.

At the Set-3 Conclave I formally announced that the infamous [now] test was to be regarded as

policy for Recognizing a Setian as II°. O.K., that seemed to be understood by all present and then

later by all recipients of the *Scroll*. So well received was the new policy that the Priesthood III°

committed itself [in front of the entire membership attending] to taking it also, by saying that it

would need to be proficient in the same knowledge that it requires for Setian Adepts.

So I worked and worked for four months putting together a magical test that would be the

envy of every magical order/coven/society/system of the 20th Century CE. I carried the damned

thing to my job, read and thought and took notes everywhere - all the while trying to cover as

much significant & comprehensive ground as was reasonable and necessary. By All Hallow's it was

all but done and, then out it went for circulation to the Priesthood.

Now I was hot to get it out because I wanted the Priesthood to have time to take it and be

finished with it before the Adepts' tests started coming in for evaluation around Vernal Equinox of

this year. Then it occurred to me that your own tests, evaluated and commented upon by me,

when returned would be an excellent guide for you to use in evaluating the tests over which you

would be officiating. Then the *Magick - **Not** Without Tears* began to rain on the test. It is now less

than three weeks until Equinox and not one III° has sent in the test for evaluation. This is in spite

of the fact that you have had it since November 1981.

And then the real confusion set it in a tizzy. Everyone (except a few concerned II°s) forgot that

testing was to occur between the South Solstice 1981 and the Vernal Equinox 1982, which is the

deadline for already-Recognized Adepts. That deadline means that the test must be in our hands

and completed for evaluation. Per my instructions that went out with the test, the allotted time for

taking the test is 90 days, and 90 days before the Vernal Equinox **is** the South Solstice!

So why is it that some II°s have only recently received their tests, while others still do not have

them? Granted I am partly at fault for not mapping out the exact procedure of whether the Adepts

should ask for the test or whether it should just be sent to them. My intention was that it just be

sent in time for them to start on the Solstice, and the confusion over this was only made known to

me ten days ago. So why didn't someone ask?

Anyway what it boils down to is that **you** were evidently waiting for **them**, and **they** were

waiting on **you**; and now **I** am stuck resolving the problem. So here is how I am going to resolve

the **entire** problem:

(1) Except in very unique instances (such as I have already been met with), the deadline

still holds. Any II° who was too unconcerned to ask for the test or at least to question

you and who now does not have enough time to complete the test, must send in what

he has completed. No special allowance will be made in evaluation, and if someone

fails, he will be reduced to Setian I°.

(2) All III°s who have II°s will instruct them to send their tests directly to me,

postmarked no later than midnight 3/20/82. I will personally evaluate each test and

then return it to the III° official who issued the test for either continued testing or for

reduction to I°.

(3) Since we all agreed that the test was such a good idea [and **it is**], and since we agreed

that all members of the Priesthood should be able to discuss the information therein,

i.e. have knowledge of White Magic, magical symbolism, and magically-related

subjects, I am now issuing the directive that **all** members of the Priesthood III° must

complete and pass the test by 4/15/82. Failure to comply with this directive will be in

direct violation of §5.01 of the Temple of Set By-Laws. While it may seem like Anubis

is being unnecessarily rigid about this, remember that I have a rather awesome

responsibility to guide the Elect to *Xem*. Neither Set nor I take it

lightly (no pun), so

if it is getting too tough, maybe it's time to reconsider your priorities and Path. If a

written test is too much for you, I can guarantee you'll never accomplish the Great

Work. Q.E.D.

On that happy note, I will close for now, but with the promise that you will soon be hearing

from me again with - you guessed it - a brand new policy. And yes, I do other things than sit

around dreaming up new policies. For instance I ... I ... er ... uh ... and then ... or ... Well anyway ...

Whatever additional new policy Barrett may have had in mind, he evidently thought better of

it, and suddenly, on 5/31/82, sent the Priesthood a brief letter resigning the High Priesthood, the

Priesthood, and the Temple of Set; and recommending Magus Lynn Norton as his successor. He

concluded:

Please honor my desire for an honorable, quiet, graceful, and quick exit by not attempting to

contact me, as it will only be futile, since I am absolutely resolved about this course of action. I am

equally resolved not to discuss this further than saying, "This is my will!"

To the entire Temple of Set, including myself, this came as a complete surprise and shock. On

6/1/82 the Council of Nine unanimously voted me back into the High Priesthood to deal with the

situation, and on 6/10/82 I sent a letter to all Setians with my initial thoughts (Appendix #56).

Indeed since relinquishing the High Priesthood to Barrett in 1979, I had largely retired from

active involvement in Temple affairs - both because I didn't want to "step on the new High

Priest's feet" and because I was immersed in two major research projects: my Ph.D. dissertation

for the University of California and my memoir/history *The Church of Satan*. So I had not been

paying much attention to Barrett's drastic new policies or their effects upon the membership

until 6/1/82, when I suddenly found myself once again in the High Priesthood and trying to get a

grip on the situation.

In his resignation letter Barrett had recommended Magus Lynn A. Norton as his successor to

the High Priesthood. Norton had been Recognized to the V° by Barrett at the Set-3 Conclave

upon his Utterance of the Word *Per-t* during the main working. It would, he promised, be

explained in detail at the next (Set-4) Conclave beginning 7/1/82 in San Francisco.

On 6/1 & 6/3 I telephoned Norton in Michigan to discuss the High Priesthood with him. I

saw no reason not to go along with Barrett's recommendation, particularly since Norton was the

Temple's newest, and presumably most "current" Magus V°. However, I said, I was concerned

about how Barrett had arbitrarily revised Temple administrative structures and procedures, as

well as the degree-system itself. Before passing along the High Priesthood again, I first wanted to

get things stabilized, and to propose revisions to the By-Laws to prevent a future “runaway High

Priest” recurrence.

What it took me a little longer to realize was that Norton liked Barrett’s stringent and

autocratic revisions just fine, and indeed was counting on them to be there for his own use upon

becoming High Priest. As a result of this the imminent Set-4 Conclave turned into a veritable

soap opera of maneuverings attempting to remove me from the High Priesthood and install

Norton in it before the By-Laws, or any of Barrett’s High Priest policies, could be changed. In the

August 1982 *Scroll* I summarized the surprising, traumatic, and exhausting outcome (Appendix

#57).

What was the extended aftermath of Ronald K. Barrett’s High Priesthood? Initially a great

shock to the Temple, which in the last year before the Set-4 Conclave had almost disintegrated

from several hundred Initiates to a mere 31. Several of the Temple’s most senior, veteran, and

accomplished Initiates had either resigned in protest against Barrett’s policies, been expelled by

him, or resigned/were expelled during the stress, confusion, emotional pain, and disillusionment

surrounding Set-4. Among the departed [in various of these categories] were Masters Margaret

Wendall, Linda Thomas, Dale Seago, Lynn Norton; Priests/Priestesses

Colleen Huddleston,

Linda Reynolds, Alexandra Sarris, Ricco Zapitelli, Robert Brink, Corey Cole, Philip Folkler,

Amber Seago, Michael Waters, and Alan Sturrock. Except in terms of "experience and lessons

learned", the Temple of Set was smaller and weaker than at any other time in its history.

Those of us who survived and remained were determined to rebuild the Temple, and this

time to expand and strengthen its By-Laws to prevent such a disaster from recurring. How we

went about that is the subject of the next chapter.

7: Remanifestation

The fall of 1982 saw the Temple of Set catching its breath after the series of surprises and

shocks accompanying the end of Ronald K. Barrett's High Priesthood. Much as in the summer of

1975, I sensed curious eyes on me as once-again High Priest: What was I going to do now? In a

10/5/1982 letter to the Priesthood, I said:

I have done quite a bit of reflection on the **phenomenon** of the Temple of Set recently. My

conclusion is that it is high time for us to get our shit together. We have spent seventeen years

generating sane really good, creative, sophisticated, and conceptually advanced material in a wide

variety of forms and contexts. It is far better than anything the "outside worlds" of academia, the

occult, conventional religions, and/or conventional philosophies have to offer. In fact it is so

damned advanced that I am still astonished at it every time I ponder it.

Its one defect is that it is still largely fragmented and disorganized. We need to clean it up,

polish it, integrate, evaluate, and interrelate it. Then, as we really begin to get it together, we need

to apply it in an extremely intelligent and evolutionary manner. [For you "old-timers", this is what

I was getting at in very rudimentary way in my original concepts of *Setamorphosis*; see relevant

III° letters from my original High Priesthood.]

The *Church of Satan* project and the *Jeweled Tablets of Set* project are all aspects of this

"bringing together" of the **significance** of the Temple and Æon of Set. If we do this successfully,

the results will be nothing short of titanic. If we drop the ball without doing it, it's kind of like

flying the *Enterprise* on impulse power: It's O.K. as far as it goes, but it just isn't the same as warp

drive!

As you can see from something like our reading list, the scope of the Temple and Æon goes far,

far beyond what is generally considered "the occult". It reaches out to the most ambitious frontiers

of existence - and aspires to go beyond. This is why I am so disappointed and frankly

contemptuous of those who tried to relegate the Temple to an introverted, inconsequential, and

incoherent little pageant concerned only with Aleister Crowley, Tarot cards, and *Her-Bak*. I am

fond of all three subjects myself - but in proportion and only insofar as they contribute to the far

greater magical and philosophical reach that is the **true** justification and glory of the Temple of

Set.A few days ago Lilith Sinclair and I spent a most interesting evening with an old friend, Dr.

Richard Sutter, whom you know as "Imperial General Tharrud Terclis, STF" in *The Dark Side.* Dr.

Sutter has never joined the Temple of Set, nor have I ever offered him honorary membership, for

much the same reasons that Terclis would not/could not became a Jedi in *The Dark Side* Yet, also

like Terclis, he is more sensitive to the significance and consequence of the Temple than many

who are formally affiliated with it.

His evaluation of the events surrounding Set-IV was blunt and candid: merely the failure of

inferior intellects and characters to continue maintaining the strain of a false image of excellence.

Further their resentment of and antagonism towards those whose excellence is neither artificial

nor an image.

I might add that, several years ago, Sutter predicted such a crisis for the Temple down to

extremely specific details - based upon psychological probabilities of the sort that became the

basis for *The Dark Side*'s MindWar concept. [I told him he was certainly mistaken.]

Our General Terclis would like to see this Jedi Order actualize its stated reasons for existence,

yet believes that its premises are too idealistic, too visionary to succeed for more than a brief

minute in the fabric of time and space. The Universe in which he has chosen to live and work is a

duller, darker, more pessimistic one than that of the Jedi; but in it he has extended his own

philosophy to remarkable limits.

Like Darth Vader and Obi-wan Kenobi, I am of the opinion that our Larger Universe is valid,

and that the initiatory process of our Jedi Order, imperfect though it may be, has something

supremely precious to impart to those whose Will it is to attain it.

So General Terclis and I disagree ... but I have learned much from our continuing dialogue.

Structurally the Temple of Set was sound enough with its legal credentials and operational

By-Laws (which had indeed been crucial in bringing the organization safely and intactly through

the RKB/Set-IV crisis). Now we turned fresh attention to our publications.

When we [re]created the Temple of Set in 1975, we thought that it should have both

temporary/periodical and permanent/reference publications. The *Scroll of Set* newsletter took

care of the former, and has amassed a vast amount of articles, essays, art, news, Order/Pylon/

Element reports, conclave pre/post-discussions, etc. since then. In this Internet age all of the

back-issues are downloadable by all Setians.

The *Jeweled Tablets* got their name-inspiration whimsically, as a takeoff on the fabled,

forbidden, and funky *Emerald Tablet of Thoth*, in which all great occult knowledge was

supposedly contained. So we decided to do a real collection of tablets, as it were, but aligned to

our initiatory degree system.

The *Crystal Tablet* (gem color of the I°) would be provided to all Setians, and issued to

entering Setians I°. It would serve as an introduction to and summary of Setian philosophy and

metaphysics, explain the various administrative systems and functional groups comprising the

Temple, and discuss opportunities for each Setian to undertake personal initiation. As it is the

Temple's "common reference document", its contents are relevant to all Setians, not just the I°.

And, like all of the *JT* s, it is constantly updated. Through the 1980s it was mailed out as a loose-

leaf binder; since then it's a CD, and all of its contents are also in the Temple's Intranet. Excerpts

from my introductory *CT* essay, "Black Magic", now appears as Part II of this *The Temple of Set*.

The *Ruby Tablet* (gem color of the II°) would be available to Adepts II° +, and would be a

repository of the Temple's more extensive and permanent documents than would normally be

found in the *Scroll of Set* newsletter. Since most of the Temple of Set's information is

intentionally for the benefit of all Adepts, the *RT* would be the largest, and "backbone", volume

of the *Jeweled Tablets*. And so it has been. By the mid-1980s it was already about 6 large red

binders in size, and was rapidly becoming cost-daunting even at nonprofit. Happily it too has

been rescued by the Internet, and is now wholly searchable & downloadable there. [And I cannot

possibly continue further here without mentioning, with the utmost admiration and frank awe,

the years of intensive, exhaustive, and perfection-obsessed work that Magister Robert Menschel,

as *Ruby Tablet* Editor, invested in that publication to transform it from a bare-bones idea to an

encyclopædia of staggering dimensions and unsurpassed quality. If a massive meteor were to

strike the Earth and obliterate all traces of the Temple of Set except for one slightly-charred copy

of the *Ruby Tablet*, I daresay that everything could be reconstituted from that alone.]

The *RT*'s contents are of equal significance to all the II° + and are contributed to by all of

them as well. The reason the *RT* is not available to the I° is twofold:

(1) The I° is a "mutual evaluation" degree, wherein both the individual and the Temple

have an extended [up to 2-year] opportunity to decide if they are suited for one

another. Some join the Temple for the wrong reasons, or decide after contact with it

that it is not after all their cup of tea. And from the Temple's perspective, some I°s

simply don't have the aptitude, intelligence, or interest to become Black Magicians,

which is what II° Recognition is all about. So during their I° time, Setians are

expected to familiarize themselves with the Temple, its ideas, its tools, and flex

their mental & magical muscles accordingly. Think of it somewhat as the "general

education requirements" of a university, with entry-level/ familiarization courses

offered by the various departments.

(2) The material in the *RT* is specifically written for Setians who have "passed the I°

test" and shown themselves to be competent enough to handle it. Essentially we

trust Recognized Adepts II° to use this information wisely and responsibly. We do

not trust the Great Unwashed [public] to do so, and entering I°s need to get their

"sea legs" first.

The *Onyx Tablet* (gem color of the III°) is available to the Priesthood of Set III° + and

contains documents specifically pertinent to the Priesthood as a personal initiatory and

consecrating experience. [General material about the III° is contained in either the *CT* or *RT* as

appropriate.] Thus the *OT* is written by III° Initiates for other III°s. Articles have to do with the

essence of the III° and how it may be Recognized in Adepts.

There are two general reasons for the *OT*'s III° + restriction:

(1) The authentic III° is a uniquely individual initiation if & when it occurs. If non-III°s

read existing III° + reflections on the Priesthood, they may be tempted to artificially

imitate others' initiation. The Priesthood of Set is not and cannot be a

"standardized office".

(2) The Priesthood of Set is the consecrated core of the Temple of Set, and as such

desires to preserve its privacy and serenity.

The *Sapphire*, *Amethyst*, & *Topaz Tablets* are all accessible to the Masters of the Temple of

Set IV° +. Their distinction is simply that each contains material and commentaries specifically

pertinent to the IV°, V°, and VI° respectively; and again this is only material that, for sound

reason (such as the initiatory capability to understand it in proper context, and again deterrence

of “initiatory imitation”) should not be in the *CT/RT* (wherein again the vast majority of

documents pertinent to the IV° + are contained).

Incidentally the IV° + access to the IV°/V°/VI° volumes reflects the principle that the IV° is

the Æonic level of individual initiation. The V° and VI° are “specialized variations” of the IV°,

and are thus fully comprehensible by it. Nor are we concerned about V° or VI° imitation, because

the very nature of such Recognitions is antithetical to this.

So if you were to put all the *JT* s side-by-side, you'd find the *RT* to be huge, the *CT* to be a sort

of “Boy Scout Handbook”, and the other four to be very slim indeed. The main “push” in our

magical & philosophical material is always to the *RT*, because there it is available to all adept

Setians II°-VI°.

This structuring of the *JT* s’ contents and access also reflects a fundamental principle of

Setian initiation: One’s Recognition to a specific degree of initiation denotes **the capacity, not**

the continuity of being present in and manifesting what is signified by that Recognition. Most

adept Setians, myself included, function 95% of the time as Adepts II°. Only in certain instances

where the unique characteristics of another degree are called for does it arise in consciousness.

I should perhaps take note in passing that today there are pirated *JT* s all over the Internet.

[There is pirated **everything** all over the Internet!] Can't help that. Because all of the *JT* s are

being updated all the time, though, the pirated versions usually incomplete and obsolete; and as

you can see here, the *OT, ST, AT,* & *TT* are relatively obscure without synchronization to

individual initiation at related levels.

In Chapter #6 and Appendix #56 I discussed High Priest Barrett's concept and introduction

of what he termed "Order Without Law". This was a system of initiatory Orders within and

subordinate to the Temple of Set proper. All I°-III° Setians were required to be "apprenticed" to

one of these Orders, each headed by a Master of the Temple IV°, and would henceforth work

primarily, if not exclusively within it. One of the consequences of this, unfortunately, was that

such Orders, most conspicuously Barrett's own Order of Anubis, simply became cliques

concerned with their own members and interests, not with the Temple of Set and all Setians

generally. By the Set-IV Conclave, members of the Order of Anubis knew more about Barrett's

policies and priorities than did the Council of Nine.

On resuming the High Priesthood, therefore, I discontinued "Order Without Law"

immediately, but the basic concept of specialized Orders within the Temple was a valuable and

viable one. In the *Crystal Tablet* I outlined how the Order system

would function henceforth:

Within the Temple of Set there exist a number of specialized Orders, each supervised by a IV°

+ Initiate as Grand Master of that Order. To contact a specific Order, communicate with the

Grand Master of that Order as listed in the Order Directory in this *Crystal Tablet*.

Perhaps the best way to visualize the Temple of Set's concept of Orders is to think of the

Temple as a university, with the Orders as the various academic departments. Students at the

university, in the course of their general education, may sample subjects at appropriate

introductory levels in various departments. Upon completing their general education, students

with an interest in or aptitude for a particular department may "major" in that department and

possibly go on to graduate work in that field. Nonetheless all the departments cooperate in the

operation of the university as a whole, and its general academic environment lends a sense of

perspective to the various departments - so that their faculty and students can relate to a world

beyond their field of specialization.

General guidelines concerning the Temple of Set's Orders are as follows:

1. Only a IV° Initiate may establish an Order within the Temple. This has been the traditional

prerogative of this degree since the time of the G.'.D.'. and the A.'.A.'.

2. An Order is characterized by special interests and emphases, which may be formalized by

special introductory and ritual procedures within that Order. Such interests and emphases

may not clash with those of the Temple of Set as a whole, and an Order's initiatory system

must be subordinate to and supportive of the system of the Temple as a whole.

3. The Grand Master (presiding IV° +) of each Order exercises complete authority over that

Order, subject to the review of the High Priest of Set.

4. Subject to exemptions approved by the High Priest, Orders will accept only II° + Setians as

Initiates. This is based on the premise that I° Setians should concentrate on their "general

magical education" prior to specializing within a particular Order.

5. While an Adept II° may specialize indefinitely, a Priest or Priestess of Set III° must possess a

high level of general knowledge. IV° +s who are Grand Masters of Orders will not Recognize

new III°s solely on the basis of their competence within a particular Order, but rather

according to their broader skills and State of Being within the Temple and Æon of Set.

6. The fruits of an Order's work must actively extend beyond the Initiates of that Order to the

Temple of Set as a whole. The only exception to this is that initiatory ceremonies within an

Order may be private to that Order, per the magical principle that uninvolved observers at

such ceremonies can impair their effectiveness.

7. Normally a Setian may belong to only one Order within the Temple of Set, on the premise that

personal efforts would otherwise be diluted. On the same premise, personal movement

between various Orders is not recommended. Aspirants are advised to interview and

correspond with various Orders **before** making a personal commitment to any one in

particular. A Setian may belong to more than one Order only by first obtaining the approval of

both Order Grand Masters.

8. Within a year of being Recognized to the II°, Adepts of the Temple are normally expected to

affiliate with an Order. There is no penalty for not doing so, but Adepts will find that an

increasing amount of Temple activity beyond the I° takes place within the Order system.

9. Setians of all degrees may freely visit activities of all Orders, except as noted in #6 above.

10. There is no required or standard internal design for an Order, save that each be headed by a

IV° + with the formal title of Grand Master.

11. Order insignia may be worn either together with Temple of Set insignia or alone. When it is

worn with Temple insignia, it must not conflict with, cover, or displace it.

12. Priests and Priestesses of Set III° will be encouraged to involve themselves with specialized

concerns of an Order only after their Priestly affairs are amply in hand. In all cases this means

active involvement with potential Setians and I°/II° Setians who are

working to become fully

Adept at the Black Arts at a personal level. In many cases it further means the establishment

and leadership of a Pylon of the Temple. [The effect of this provision is that an enthusiastic II°

member of a particular Order will have to resolve to put Order-specific interests on the back

burner should he or she be Recognized to the Priesthood of Set. Active work within Orders will

be done mostly by II° and IV° Initiates, with III°s contributing only after their more general

responsibilities within the Temple are fulfilled. Hence II°s who are intensely interested in a

particular Order should consider this provision before aspiring to the III°.]

13. Orders' areas of focus may be historic, philosophical, geographic, psychological, or almost

anything else that does not conflict with the Temple of Set's basic ethical guidelines.

Accompanying this Introduction in the *Crystal Tablet* are general statements from the various

Orders. Some are currently active, some are temporarily inactive, and some are historically

dormant. Check the "Orders" Directory file to see which ones are currently active. If you are

curious concerning one or more of the other Orders, many of which have a rich legacy of

contribution to the archives of the Temple of Set, examine the InterCommunication Roster to see

if Initiates involved with them are included. Also examine the Back-Issue Collection of the *Scroll*

of Set for Order-related articles.

In 1982, however, the Temple of Set did not yet have a functioning model for this new

generation of Order. That was about to change, far away in Germany.

8: The Wewelsburg Working

On November 8, 1982 I wrote to the Priesthood of Set [and thereafter to all Setians in the

February 1983 *Scroll of Set*]:

The Wewelsburg Working - Background

The reason for my silence during the past month is about to be explained; I have been

out of the country. During the first part of October I participated in a series of tours of

NATO installations in England, Belgium, and Germany arranged through the World

Affairs Council.

I haven't been to London and Brussels since 1958 or to Germany since XIII, so it was

interesting to see the changes and non-changes that have occurred. It was surprising to

discover that london, which I had supposed to be a nerve-center of

occultism, has only

one tiny bookshop - “Atlantis” - dealing in the Black Arts. It is perhaps 1/4 the size of

Gilbert’s in L.A. or Weiser’s in NYC, and I made no discoveries within its shelves. The

owner was pleased to display a stock of our informational pamphlets, however.

On the next block I bumped into the London office of E.J. Brill, the Dutch publishers

who once published *Seth, God of Confusion* hardcover and expensive. For many years it

has been out of print; now it is back in print softcover and less expensive (48.00 Dutch

Gld.). we will explore ways to order this unique volume at minimum inconvenience to

Setians.

After the conclusion of the NATO tours, I was able to undertake a long-awaited

personal quest. In “That Other Black Order”, an article on Nazi occultism which I wrote

for *Cloven Hoof* #IV-4 (April VII) [*The Church of Satan* Appendix #40], I recounted that

Heinrich Himmler had appropriated a Westphalian castle, the Wewelsburg, and had

modified it for ritual and Black Magical activities of the SS. The more I tried to obtain

details concerning the Wewelsburg, the more frustrated I became. It was soon apparent

that author after author has simply recited the half-paragraph’s worth of rumors first

published in the mid-1950s. No one had troubled to visit the castle [if

it still existed] nor

photograph it.

Until this last month, therefore, I had no idea whether the Wewelsburg still existed

and, if so, whether the chambers in question had been destroyed, remodeled, or simply

sealed.

Tourist guidebooks of Germany made no mention of the castle; it was only with the

aid of a large-scale map of Westphalia that I found the initials "Schl"[oss] next to the tiny

village of Wewelsburg. It is the better part of a day's drive on the high-speed autobahn

from Frankfurt on 10/19, then a zig-zag course through a thick forest on a small back road

into the town, which looked as small and sleepy as any other German town. Still no castle

to be seen.

Then a directional marker ("Zum Schloss") pointing down a back alley, with more

twists and turns, and then: Castle Wewelsburg, apparently intact and perfectly preserved,

and virtually invisible even from the town because of the surrounding forests and terrain.

As seen from above it is in the shape of an isosceles triangle, with the keep at the north

apex and the other two towers at the southwest and southeast corners.

Passing the small guardhouse (with a defaced but still legible "SS" stone emblem

atop), I crossed the bridge to the main entrance in the east wall, entered the courtyard,

and knocked at the door of what was evidently a small museum of the castle's medieval

history. In answer to my questions, the elderly curator politely informed me that the two

ritual chambers were very much intact. Would I like to see them? Indeed I would, thank

you!

The Wewelsburg is used [except for the museum and the two ceremonial chambers] as

a youth hostel. Entering the North Tower from the courtyard brings one to the "Marble

Hall". This circular chamber is completely unfurnished, save for two black floor-

candleholders with red candles by one of the doors. Into the center of the red marble floor

is set a rune-wheel made of green stone, with the central disc of black marble. Each rune

points to one of 12 green sandstone columns, forming cross arris vaults above 12 windows

also framed in green sandstone. The chamber's only other decoration is a roughly-hewn

block of stone above the door with the black candleholders.

To give you some idea of the wild distortions that have been published concerning the

Wewelsburg, the following is quoted from Francis King's *Satan and Swastika*:

The center of the castle was the great banqueting hall, furnished with a gigantic table

around which were placed large wooden chairs almost thrones

upholstered with pigskin

and with the name of the rightful occupant inscribed on silver plates. In these chairs

Himmler and his favorite subordinates would sit both for conferences concerned with

mundane matters and for group meditation - long hours of silence in which the

participants were supposed to strengthen their ties with the “Race Soul”. Besides Himmler

himself, never more than 12 SS men were allowed to sit down at the table; the reasons for

this are not clear, but it is possible that he was either blasphemously parodying the Last

Supper or seeing himself symbolizing the Sun surrounded by the 12 signs of the Zodiac.

Above the banqueting hall were Himmler’s own rooms ... Below the hall was the crypt,

the ‘realm of the dead’, in which 12 unoccupied pedestals were placed around a stone

hollow. On the death of each of Himmler’s chosen 12, his coat of arms was to be burned,

and the ashes placed in an urn on one of the pedestals ...

In actuality the floor emblem and other architectural features of the Marble Hall make

it clear that the chamber was never designed to contain a central table, nor do the original

SS plans (which I examined) show it ever containing one. The conference hall in the west

wall held a large, but not “gigantic” table and approximately 30 - not 12 - of the large

leather - not pigskin, nor with silver nameplate - chairs referred to [I

tried one out].

The dining hall was a third, smaller hall located in the south wall. Himmler's own

rooms were not above any of the three halls; they were in the southwest tower. Neither

the library nor the weapons museum were in Himmler's rooms; they were in separate

rooms on different floors.

The recurring 12s of the Marble Hall probably have a solar/cosmic significance rather

than a personal/human one. There were 12 central SS offices, each headed by an

Obergruppenführer (Lt. General). [A 12-seat table would have excluded the 13th:

Himmler himself!]

The Hall of the Dead is located directly beneath the Marble Hall in the North Tower.

To enter it one must go outside the castle and down to the base of the North Tower. A

stone stair leads down to the Hall.

The Hall of the Dead is domed; at the apex of the dome is a rune-accented swastika.

Four holes in this emblem have encouraged the popular idea that there was a concealed

smoke vent in the ceiling; this is not the case.

The four large windows opening into the Hall from the exterior of the tower argue

against the Hall's being designed as a tomb, nor are the 12 pedestals high enough or

protected enough for funerary urns. They are platforms for either statues or live

individuals.

The acoustics of the chamber are such that, standing upon a pedestal, one can be

heard in a whisper in any other part of the room.

The central pit is not designed for bonfires. Its purpose became clear to me as soon as

I descended into it; it places an individual at the acoustic focus of the chamber, as well as

at the converging focus of the light channeled from the four 5-foot window passages. The

effect is devastating. One shimmers with light from the Sun, Moon, or stars in an

otherwise shadowed and darkened chamber; and one's voice whether lowered to a

whisper or raised to a shout is magnified and multiplied and mirrored back to the focus.

Upon returning to the medieval museum rooms with the curator, I enquired whether I

might be able to spend some time in the Hall of the Dead alone. To my surprise he

assented, providing that I sign in the logbook for the key. I did so, returned alone to the

Hall, locked myself in, and undertook what I shall henceforth refer to as the Wewelsburg

Working. It is discussed in a separate paper.

Late in the afternoon I closed the chamber, returned the key to the curator, and

departed for Frankfurt and the rest of the World of Horrors.

Subsequently I had the opportunity to visit the Obersalzberg complex. Having written

about it in *Secret of the Lost Ark*, I was frankly curious to see if my description squared

with reality. I am pleased to report that it does.

Adolf Hitler's own house - the Berghof - is now so completely overgrown with forest

that it's impossible to find it unless you know where to look. [It took me a half-hour's

plunging around in the underbrush]. On Walpurgis 1952 the ruins of the Berghof were

dynamited by the German government; only one partially-underground room remains.

Back in San Francisco I am now recovering from jet-lag, reading mail, and pondering

many things.

The Wewelsburg Working

Date/Time: October 19, XVII/3:00-4:30 PM.

Location: Hall of the Dead/Walhalla, North Tower, Wewelsburg Castle, Westphalia,

Germany.

Key:

19th Part of the Word of Set, Æthyr LIL.

Purposes:

• To obtain a full Understanding of the significance of the crisis that befell the

Temple of Set in June-July XVII.

• To energize the advent of the Working Year XVIII.

• As the Wewelsburg was conceived by Heinrich Himmler to be the "Mittelpunkt der

Welt", and as the focus of the all of the Dead was to be the Gate of that Center, to

summon the Powers of Darkness at their most powerful locus.

Results:

What emerged from this Working was not a written text, such as the *Book of Coming*

Forth by Night or the *Word of Set*, but rather a twofold sensation: First, the suction-like

impression of the inflow of certain realizations and kinds of knowledge (accompanied by

an almost "electrical" sort of exhilaration), which seemed to have "remained dormant"

pending an "activating" Working of this sort. Second, an extended "reverberation" or

"echoing" of the focus of this Working within the Walhalla, culminating in its sending-

forth into the material world.

The central features of the various principal occultisms of the 19th and 20th centuries

CE ran through my consciousness almost as a pageant. I understood the object of this to

be an exposure of contrasts, inaccuracies, and inconsistencies a vast, spiraling dialectic

designed to clear away the debris of sectarianism and superficiality in the search for the

key principles of the true Powers of Darkness.

Concepts of "will", "intelligence", "self-consciousness", "initiation",

and “magic”

appeared in turn and fell aside as well; I saw them as useful, but still, surprisingly,

peripheral to the central concept being approached. When at last all veils had been

removed, and that concept was revealed, it was so simple as to seem at first anticlimactic

and almost disappointing. It was: the phenomenon of life.

Instantly I regretted my impatience and arrogance, my lapse into easy

disappointment. Too many doors had been opened, too many forces unlocked and

unleashed for this to be the ultimate impact of the Working. Then it was as though a “test”

were passed: The basic concept of “life” became a sort of focal point, like that of a

refractor telescope, through which the energies of the Working passed. The initial

“dialectic” had reduced all to a pinpoint of fact, and now that fact, unencumbered, was

expanding to full significance.

Human beings are accustomed to thinking of “nature” as including all animate and

inanimate life forms, themselves included. It was the approach of the Church of Satan,

and later of the Temple of Set, to single out self-consciousness as the characteristic feature

of That which stood in contrast to the harmony of the natural cosmos. In fact all life has

some degree of intelligence [not to be confused with self-consciousness], and somewhere

within that intelligence is a subcomponent of self-consciousness, which only becomes

evident when the level of basic intelligence is relatively high.

The error in any operation designed to strengthen the self-consciousness necessarily

follows from the fact that self-consciousness is a function of the core intelligence, and

there are many other functions of intelligence as well. Initiation thus treats a

"symptom", not a "cause"; this leads the "cure" in unanticipated directions.

The Church of Satan and the Temple of Set have grappled with this problem for all the

years of their existence without recognizing its actual depth. Strengthen, exalt, and

encourage the willful self, and you cannot avoid strengthening the natural instincts as

well. No human being is free from these; they may be kept in check for years, but in

eventual moments of stress, weakness, or stimulus they will break free. They may be

either creative or destructive; this is not a mere "Jekyll/Hyde" scenario.

All initiatory efforts that are not deliberate frauds from the most childish to the most

sophisticated are conceits of the self-conscious intellect. Those that profess to be natural,

universal, nirvanic, or otherwise "Right-Hand Path" are ultimately exercises in self-

delusion, if in fact the adherents actually believe in their own rhetoric.

Sooner or later the

masquerade becomes tiresome, the daydream boring, and the devotee discards it in favor

of other sensory stimuli.

The anti-natural systems of the “left-Hand Path”, on the other hand, think to suppress

some aspects of the intellect while strengthening others. What results is a condition of

strain which, should the tension become too great, will snap back to an equilibrium which

may be more or less viable than it originally was.

The intelligent mind cannot be “escaped” so easily. If it is argued, convinced,

threatened, hypnotized, drugged, or diseased into non-rational channels, then its self-

consciousness will merely reassert itself in some other form. This, I understood in the

Wewelsburg, was the “magical epitaph” of Nazi Germany: That, in fighting against certain

features of the mind, it had seemed at first to succeed but then had thus unleashed other,

even less desirable features of that same mind which had previously remained in some

rough degree of socially-controlled equilibrium before this ultimately disastrous

experiment in “conscious evolution” was attempted.

The chamber in which I stood, I now realized, was nothing less than an SS laboratory

for experiments in “conscious evolution” - a sort of “Krel machine” without computerized,

science-fiction accouterments. It was not designed to teach or educate, rather to mirror

and enhance thoughts and impulses already in existence. Hence its effect on the

consciousness could be devastating for better or for worse.

The 18-year experience of the Church of Satan and Temple of Set now began to appear

in a new perspective. Anton LaVey had thought to enhance conscious evolution by freeing

the mind from self-imposed emotional prisons. He did so, enjoyed a measure of success,

yet saw to his increasing dismay that new and more uncontrollable prisons were erected

in their place.

Whereas the initial ones had been socially imposed, however, resulting in minds more

or less tractable in society, these replacements were the product of random, unforeseen,

intellectual imbalances. In a few cases the results were those of at least temporary genius.

More often, however, the results were tragically self-destructive.

Anton LaVey erred in blaming the organization of the Church of Satan for this. That

organization per se was not at fault; if anything it was a stabilizing influence. When he

decided to exploit the organization in 1975, those working coherently within it felt

wronged, said so, and formed the Temple of Set.

The Temple of Set was intended to be the perfect initiatory organization. It exploited

no one; it offered every conceivable opportunity to everyone. Its most valuable

inheritance from the Church of Satan was a commitment to the rejection of nonsense,

occult or otherwise. The future, it seemed, was a banquet of intellectual evolution at which

to feast.

Yet the Temple too began to suffer shock after shock, as often as not caused by senior

Initiates. At first these were explained as freak events and blamed upon the inadequacies

of the individuals in question. But as the phenomenon happened again and again, this

seemed more an excuse than an explanation. Finally, in the summer of XVII, a conspiracy

by several senior Initiates to pervert and degrade the Temple was only barely exposed and

stopped in time. But the damage was devastating, if not indeed fatal - not to the structure

itself, but to the assumptions concerning initiation which had formed the basis of that

structure.

The Temple of Set's soaring hopes for the perfect initiatory medium, it seemed, had

been dashed. In curing the symptom which Anton LaVey had attacked, it had thought to

solve the essential problem. But, just as he had focused his anger and contempt on the

wrong thing, so the Temple had poured its trust and confidence into an improvement of

that **same wrong thing**. The actual culprit - the disproportionately "evolved" intellect -

escaped the clear comprehension of both.

The forces that would lead to the destruction of the Church of Satan in 1975 were not

set in motion by Wayne West in 1971; they were activated on Walpurgisnacht I. Similarly

the Temple of Set, thinking that it had destroyed those forces in 1975, had succeeded only

in closing certain doors to them so that they would have to find other means of

manifestation. After an initial delay, they did.

Now, in the Hall of the Dead, I sought a solution to the dilemma of the 18-year

Working. Is the lesson of I-XVIII ultimately that **there is no way out** - that all initiation

is merely Russian roulette in fancy dress?

But here the Understanding that had so far come so powerfully and clearly failed me.

It was as though the Wewelsburg, having discharged a "battery" that had remained

charged for 40 years, had no more current to provide.

Having drunk at this magical fountain of youth, however, I myself felt energized as I

had not since the North Solstices of V and X. The Hall of the Dead now seemed an

insulation against random discharge of this energy. Action must now give way to reaction;

how should I direct this reaction?

In considering this, my attention came to rest on the concept of the

Order of the

Trapezoid. As will be recalled, this concept as employed by both the Church and the

Temple has gone through many adjustments and redefinitions over the years. Yet it has

endured and attracted because it seemed to “say something” that the Church and the

Temple could not. What might this be?

During those periods when it was not employed as a synonym for the Priesthood, the

Order has been used as a talisman to evoke a kind of diabolical *Schadenfreude*, a grim

enjoyment of the predicament of self-conscious humanity. “Here you are in a state of

Satanic self-awareness,” it seemed to say. “You cannot escape it; you cannot change it for

the better or for the worse. Therefore: Experience it; savor its taste, sense its exquisite

pain and pleasure. Do not wallow in it like an animal in warm mud; rather cut it as you

would a fine gem, and behold the brilliance of its facets.”

When singing this song of Lorelei, the Order has seemed oddly antithetical to the

Church of Satan and Temple of Set, both of which incorporated the premise of self-

awareness but which then promised different types of escape, change, and improvement

[thus the justification for affiliation, as well as the success-barometer of the degree

system]. As an “Ur-Doppelgänger” of these creative institutions, however, the Order’s

name and presence has waxed with their setbacks and waned with their successes. It is

not an “evil antithesis” as much as it is a mirrored image - an alternate setting for the

Graal of the Prince of Darkness.

Here in the Hall of the Dead, Heinrich Himmler’s Sanctum Sanctorum and

“Mittelpunkt der Welt”, was the Earthly focus of That which has been thus symbolized by

the Order of the Trapezoid. The reality of this chamber rushed in upon me. This was no

Hollywood set, no ordinary room painted and decorated to titillate the senses. 1,285

inmates of the Niederhagen concentration camp died during the reconstruction of the

Wewelsburg for the SS. If the Marble Hall and the Walhalla were memorials to a certain

unique quality in mankind, they also serve as grisly reminders of the penalty which

mankind pays for that quality.

I saw before me the sigil of the Order of the Trapezoid as originally designed by Anton

LaVey: the pentagram within a trapezoid extending slightly below the two lower points,

the three curved 6s, the trident rising from the flames of Hell. I saw its later design in the

Church, the 6s and the flames now gone. I saw its first design in the Temple of Set: the

Tcham scepter with the head and forked tail of Set replacing the Satanic trident. I saw

Ronald Barrett's subsequent concept: a simple pentagram with the four upper points

connected.

So now the principle should be completed - the Law of the Trapezoid finally and

completely fused into its emblem. There appeared then the Sigil of the Order as

reproduced here. It is a return to the initial Sigil, with the following changes: The curved-

line fires of Hell are replaced by the Black Flame, whose emanations are rays, not

flickering tongues. There are nine rays, each in strict mathematical proportion to the

pentagram or trapezoid. The source-point of the Black Flame completes the pentagram, as

called for in the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*. Two of the rays of the Flame complete

the inverse pentagon about the pentagram, creating a total of nine Golden Section

trapezoids in the entire sigil. The three 6s are restored, but with no curved lines. The Set-

headed and -tailed *Tcham* scepter of ancient Khem rises from the Black Flame, its head at

the center of the pentagram. Its tail, against the three central rays of the Flame, forms a

"W", denoting the "Walhalla" or Hall of the Dead at Schloss Wewelsburg, the Great Gate

of the Powers of Darkness in our Time.

The direction of the Working's reaction seemed clear before me; I thus cast forth the

full existence of the Order of the Trapezoid into the world. After 18

years the Key has been

forged in the *Word of Set,* and the Gate of the Wewelsburg is opened.

Where the Church of Satan and Temple of Set have appeared, so has the shadow of

That signified by the Order been reflected. Now it has been loosed in its full force.

Whether or not the sacred Priesthood continues to exist, the Order will do so: for its

release is an inevitable legacy of the I-XVIII Working. Mankind received the utopian

visions of the Church of Satan and Temple of Set only as it strived to be worthy of them; it

will continue to receive them only as it continues to prove itself so worthy.

But the Order of the Trapezoid, whether known by its true name or by countless

others, will always exist - not as a visible institution, but as a principle in the intelligent

mind. Anton Szandor LaVey's Law of the Trapezoid will endure as well: Those who

recognize the principle will be able to turn it to their deliberate use [whether to their

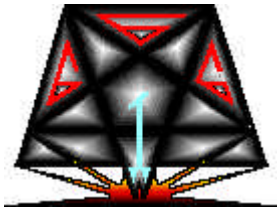
ultimate benefit or detriment]; those who do not will nonetheless be subject to it [whether

to their ultimate benefit or detriment].

So It Is Done.

Soon thereafter I announced the reformation of the Order of the Trapezoid in the *Crystal*

Tablet of Set:



Order of the Trapezoid

When once the restraining talisman of the Christian cross is broken in Germany, then

the fury of the ancient warriors, the berserk rage of which the Nordic poets sang, will surge

up again. The old stone gods will rise from long-forgotten ruins and rub the dust of a

thousand years from their eyes; and Thor with his giant hammer will leap up and smash

the Gothic cathedrals. And when that crash comes, it will be like nothing heard before in

history. - Heinrich Heine, 1834

The “mainstream” of the Western magical tradition may be said to have a

Mediterranean origin: Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, and Rome - and the later syntheses

of these ancient cultures through the Medieval, Renaissance, and Enlightenment eras.

In marked contrast to the Mediterranean tradition is the school of thought which

originated in the northern areas of Europe and Scandinavia: the Nordic or Germanic

tradition. Most notable in this tradition, of course, is its lack of features either derivative

of Judaeo/Christianity or prior to and prototypical of it. The Germanic

metaphysics

developed in an alien environment, remained largely isolated from the Mediterranean

influence during the Roman Empire, and were suppressed rather than assimilated during

the Christian centuries which followed.

It was in the late 19th century CE that this ancient Germanic tradition returned to play

more than a mere mythological part in European affairs. It is perhaps not surprising that

it surfaced during the Second Reich of Kaiser Wilhelm I and Otto von Bismarck. Until

their unification by Prussia, the Germanic states had been weak and unstable in

comparison to the larger nation-states of the continent. Periodically ravaged by foreign

armies, Germany had earned the unenviable title of the “battleground of Europe”.

The 19th century heralded the onset of a new movement in European culture:

Romanticism. It was a reaction to and a rejection of the methodical, practical - but just as

often frustrating and stifling - scientific materialism which had resulted from the

industrial revolution. In its original, more transcultural sense, Romanticism implied

uninhibited individualism. In German, however, it gripped the imagination to a

somewhat deeper degree. Gustau Pauli, in Dehio’s *Geschichte der deutschen Kunst*

(1919-1934), states:

Romanticism is Germanic and reached its purest expression in those territories which

are most free from Roman colonization. Everything that is regarded as an essential aspect

of the romantic spirit: irrationalism, the mystic welding-together of subject and object, the

tendency to intermingle the arts, the longing for the faraway and the strange, the feeling

for the infinite and the continuity of historic development - all these are characteristic of

German Romanticism, and so much so that their union remains unintelligible to the

Latins. What is known as Romanticism in France has only its name in common with

German Romanticism.

Crucial also to German Romanticism were the concepts of **dynamism** and **life-**

worship. The former term represents an urge towards constant movement and

evolution, whether intellectual, artistic, or social. It differs from the Setian concept of

Xeper in that Romantic dynamism is non-Platonic; it is supra-rational rather than guided

by logic, ethics, and *nœtic* apprehension.

German Romantic life-worship was not love and respect for the phenomenon of life

per se, but rather a compulsion to exercise one's own life - to "really live" rather than to

simply exist. Again this is commendable, but as with dynamism it can be dangerous in

excess - when one's "rage to live" interrupts and consumes the lives of others.

The uncanny attraction of the Third Reich - Nazi Germany - lies in the fact that it

endorsed and practiced both dynamism and life-worship without restraint and to a world-

shaking degree of success. In *The Revolution of Nihilism* (1939), Herman Rauschning

said:

This irrational element in National Socialism is the actual source of its strength. It is

the reliance on it that accounts for its "sleepwalker's immunity" in the face of one practical

problem after another. It explains why it was possible for National Socialism to attain

power almost without the slightest tangible idea of what it was going to do. The movement

was without even vague general ideas on the subject; all it had was boundless confidence:

things would smooth themselves out one way or another ... Its strength lay in incessant

activity and in embarking on anything so long as it kept things moving ... National

Socialism is action pure and simple, dynamics in vacuo, revolution at a variable tempo,

ready to be changed at any moment.

Similarly the life-worship of the Third Reich was not what the "Mediterranean" mind

understands by this term. The "life" is the life of the state, or more precisely the *Volk*

(perhaps best translated as the "soul of the people"). The individual

achieves self-

realization as, through his efforts, he contributes to the strengthening of this “soul”.

Just as the Third Reich’s dynamism got out of hand, leading it to embark on irrational

and destructive foreign invasions, so its life-worship - which could have been a truly

evolutionary synthesis of the most sublime concepts of Hegel and Nietzsche - became

perverted into crude xenophobia, hatreds built upon superficial notions of “race”, and

ultimately a maddened stampede towards a Wagnerian *Götterdämmerung* in defiance of

a return to rationalism. Said Heinrich Himmler on April 21, 1945:

We have made serious mistakes. If I could have a fresh start, I would do many things

differently now. But it is too late. We wanted greatness and security for Germany, and we

are leaving behind us a pile of ruins, a fallen world ...

The Order of the Trapezoid (O.Tr.) extracts the positive, the constructive, the exalted,

and the Romantic from the Germanic magical tradition - and just as carefully avoids and

rejects those excesses, distortions, and cruelties which have made this tradition an object

of the most extraordinary fear, condemnation, and suppression in the postwar period.

The Germanic tradition is also part of the legacy of the Prince of Darkness, hence is

appropriate to an Order within the Temple of Set, which embraces all manifestations of

the Powers of Darkness in the world.

Nevertheless the care required in any investigation into this tradition cannot be

overemphasized. Magical and research ability are not enough; ethical sensitivity and

social discretion are just as important. The prospects for new and wondrous perspectives

on the Black Art are exhilarating, but success will come only if the Order conducts its

affairs with the same dedication and nobility that have made the Temple of Set a legend in

its time.

Lineage of the Order

The O.Tr. was founded as an informal Order within the Church of Satan by the

authority of Anton Szandor LaVey as High Priest. Its existence was first announced in the

December V/1970 *Cloven Hoof*:

The O.Tr. is the “board of directors” and security staff of the Church. Its functions are

many, and its members are chosen by appointment, according to the special abilities and

attributes of each. All Priests and Priestesses are automatically admitted into the Order,

although the identities of most members of the Order are unknown even to each other.

Members of the Governing or Grand Council of the Trapezoid are known only to the High

Priest, who solicits their aid when required.

There was a strong Germanic element in the rituals of the early Church of Satan,

deriving from the musical imagery of Richard Wagner and from the visual imagery of

Weimar-era Expressionism (Max Reinhardt, Hans Poelzig). The significance of the

trapezoid itself came from its suggestion of perspective and the distortion of that

perspective in such UFA films as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *The Golem*. From ritual

use of similar angles and planes in such ceremonies as “Die Elektrischen Vorspiele” [in

The Satanic Rituals], Anton LaVey made observations culminating in his “Law of the

Trapezoid”:

All obtuse angles are magically harmful to those unaware of this property. The same

angles are beneficial, stimulating, and energizing to those who are magically sensitive to

them.

In the December V/1970 *Cloven Hoof* article, five literary sources for this principle

were identified: William Mortensen’s *The Command to Look*, Louis McCarty’s *The Great*

Pyramid Jeezeh, Sheila Ostrander & Lynn Schroeder’s *Psychic Discoveries Behind the*

Iron Curtain (Chapter 27), Frank Belknap Long’s *The Hounds of Tindalos*, and H.P.

Lovecraft’s *The Haunter of the Dark*. The Council of the Trapezoid, alternatively

identified as the Council of Nine, was in fact an informal, unofficial

cabinet without fixed

membership, terms, functions, or binding authority. In X/1975 it attained formal status as

the corporate board of directors and supreme executive body of the Temple of Set.

Apart from early Council meetings, which ceased ca. late 1970, no Order meetings or

functions distinct from those of the Priesthood were held in the Church of Satan. In VI the

Order was officially defined as comprising the III°-V° initiates within the Church, i.e. the

collective Satanic Priesthood. In 1973 Anton LaVey again reconstituted the Order, this

time to identify significant contributors to and representatives of the Satanic tradition,

within or without the formal Church and Priesthood. Again there were no meetings,

functions, or publications of this Order.

From 1975 to 1979 the Order was again used as an alternate designation for all degrees

within the Priesthood of Set, and at the Set-I Conclave in 1979 the Council of Nine

replaced the Satanic trident in its emblem with the *Tcham* sceptre of Set. At the Set-III

Conclave in 1981 the Order was once again reconstituted, this time as an honorary

designation for all present and past members of the Council of Nine, and its emblem was

condensed to a pentagram within a trapezoid.

In the *Walhalla* or “Hall of the Dead” at Castle Wewelsburg, Westphalia - the

subterranean *sanctum sanctorum* of the German castle which Heinrich Himmler had

reconstructed for his own Workings in the Black Art - Michael A. Aquino VI°, High Priest

of Set, conducted a Working on October 19, 1982. One of the results of this Working was

the reconstitution of the O.Tr. as a truly functioning Order under the authority of the

Temple of Set.

The O.Tr. is an Order of knighthood characterized by strict personal honor and

faithfulness to the quest for the Grail. The Order is a **knighthood** in that its members are

pledged to the traditional chivalric virtues as appropriate to each situation encountered.

By **honor** is meant a sense of justice, ethics, and responsibility prior to personal comfort,

convenience, or advantage. This honor is known by one’s **faithfulness** to the Quest for

the Grail, which is the self, soul, or *psyche* made perfect through conscious refinement

and exercise of the will. Attainment of the Grail results in transformation of the individual

into a state of dynamic existence energized by the *psyche*, not by the physical body

derived from the objective universe. Hence the O.Tr. is the gate to psychecentric

immortality beyond physical death.

The insignia of the O.Tr. is an inverse pentagram whose four upper

points define the

limits and angles of a *phi*-trapezoid. From the nethermost point of the pentagram radiates

the Black Flame of Set, whose nine tongues signify the Council of Nine and complete the

angular relationships of the pentagram and trapezoid. Rising from the Black Flame is a

Tcham sceptre, symbol of Pharaonic authority in ancient Egypt, bearing the head and

forked tail of Set. The sceptre faces to the left, symbolic of the Left-Hand Path of Black

Magic. The space between the Black Flame and the *Tcham* sceptre forms the letter “W”,

signifying *Walhalla*. This is both the name of the chamber in the Wewelsburg, Westphalia

wherein the Order was consecrated; and the famous hall of eternal life to which ancient

Teutonic heroes were brought by the Walkyries and admitted by Wotan. Thus the letter

“W” has a fivefold meaning (including the Motto of the Order) in addition to its primary

reference. In the topmost three gaps between the pentagram and the trapezoid are the

numbers 666, symbolic of the Prince of Darkness and of the First and Second Beasts

revealed of him. The three sixes add to XVIII ÆS, the first Working Year following the

creation of the Church of Satan, and the year in which the O.Tr. was returned to life. In

the entire emblem there are no curved lines, signifying the Black Magical power of

angular relationships and the Law of the Trapezoid. It is further mathematically keyed to

the *phi*-ratio.

Admission

Admission to the O.Tr. is by invitation only. To be considered, one must first achieve

the degree of Adept II° in the Temple of Set, and evidence a sufficiently comprehensive

involvement in the Temple as a whole to preclude over-concentration in the magical

philosophy of the Order.

As a general policy Oaths of the Order will be administered in a lodge setting, either at

Conclaves of the Temple of Set or at lodges of the Order presided over by the lodge-master

or a Master of the O.Tr. Masters of the O.Tr. may authorize special alternative

arrangements as necessary.

Runes is the newsletter of the O.Tr. It is named in honor of the *Runen* newsletter of

the Germanen Orden, an esoteric society in pre- and post-World War I Germany. The

Fenris Wolf on its masthead comes from ancient north European

mythology. Fenris was

one of the dæmonic offspring of Loki, and the brother of Hel and of the Midgard Serpent.

Growing up in Asgard among the gods, he eventually became so huge and fierce that the

gods decided to bind him. The only cord which could hold Fenris was made of the

elements of the Earth by the dwarves. It was said that at Ragnarök, the end of times,

Fenris would break free. According to the *Völuspa* (ca. 9th century CE), a text from

Norway and Iceland:

The chains that hold the Fenris Wolf are rent asunder, and the Wolf courses about.

Brothers shall fight and slay one another; sisters' sons shall break the bonds of kinship. It

shall fare hard with the world: great whoredom, an axe-age, a sword-age, shields shall be

cloven, a wind-age, a wolf-age, ere the world sinks in ruin. No man shall spare the other.

Fenris as *Runes'* masthead thus symbolizes the Powers of Darkness temporarily

constrained by the objective universe. It is also a reminder that the price of loosing the

Wolf - to energize evolutionary consciousness in humanity - is to risk chaos in the natural

order by lesser humanity's misuse of its power over nature. This is the Æon of Set, when

the human psyche can soar free of its animalistic fetters; but it is also a wolf-age in which

much of the planet suffers through human carelessness and

callousness - the result of

corruption of the powers of high intelligence. The O.Tr. seeks to allow Fenris to run free in

his magnificence - as the Prince of Darkness created him - but further to show that his

freedom through initiation of the Will will exalt, not debase mankind. The artistic

rendition of Fenris is reproduced from the cover of the August 1941 issue of *Germanien*,

official journal of the Ahnenerbe, the elite section of the SS concerned with the theory and

practice of the Black Arts.

Let none who fears

The spear of Wotan

Adventure across this fire!

- Richard Wagner, *Die Walküre*

If the scope of the Temple of Set weren't already broad enough, I think it can be seen here

that that of the O.Tr. added several more extensions and dimensions to it. [And this was just the

first of many new and highly-sophisticated/highly-visionary Orders.] Whereas the cultural and

iconographic orientation of the Temple had previously taken its inspiration from ancient Egypt,

the O.Tr. had now opened the door to the equally vast, and in many ways even less-studied and

more-obscure metaphysics of ancient northern Europe. Particularly ominous in this was that

Nazi Germany, and especially its feared SS, had also taken especial interest in this same area of

archæological, philosophical, and magical research, and it was obvious that the O.Tr. would be

reopening some of the same doors that had been slammed shut by the rest of the world on

Walpurgisnacht 1945.

Well, until this problem could be carefully and constructively addressed, the Order had

plenty of other avenues of interest to explore and enjoy, among these scientific magic (including

mad scientists and their mad laboratories), architectural magic (haunted houses and

Lovecraftian geometry), and artistic magic (particularly in such fields as Expressionism, *noir*,

and Art Deco). **This** was going to be **fun**, not just for the Order, but for the whole Temple!

Runes spent its initial years as a Temple-wide newsletter, mailed out on alternating months from

the *Scroll*, and a sampling of some of my articles for it during that time appears here as

Appendices #58-65.

As interesting and entertaining as such an Indiana Jones romp through the Twilight Zone

might be, it was also conspicuously clear that this new Order of the Trapezoid's Germanic-lore

roots were very shallow, extending back little farther than the Romanticism of Wagner and the

Art Nouveau/Deco/Expressionism of the early 20th century. I tracked down and combed

through a good deal of Ahnenerbe-SS documents in the Library of Congress and the U.S.

National Archives microfilm files, but exclusive reliance on Nazi research into Germanic

antiquity was precarious. The SS obviously had an ideological agenda to maximize and glamorize

the "Aryan" myth, and Ahnenerbe historians and archæologists who wished career advancement

knew what they were expected to find. [This of course is the same in any other community

wishing to polish its pedigree, but Heinrich Himmler was pushing against 2,000 years of Judæo-

Christian worldwide indoctrination, and a mere 12 years (the last half of which was complicated

by World War II) was not enough to break through even the less-factually-based bastions of

"established" academia.]

More than once in the odyssey of the Temple of Set [and indeed the Church of Satan before

it], an individual, event, or circumstance has appeared at precisely the moment it was needed.

"Once," said Auric Goldfinger to James Bond, "is happenstance. Twice is coincidence. The third

time it's enemy action." In our case it might not be "enemy" action, but as such catalytic

phenomena have continued to proliferate to our furtherance and improvement, one might well

appreciate in them the hand of the Prince of Darkness.

On January 13, 1984 the Temple of Set received the following letter:

Order of the Shining Trapezoid

Austin, Texas

Hail Keepers of the Temple!

Recently a relatively small but dedicated circle of people here have begun a semiformal

Satanic working group. Our basis has generally been the system of the Church of Satan, of which I

have been a member. However the particular constellation of elements which seem to be present

in the workings of the Temple of Set are very interesting to me - especially since I have extensive

knowledge of and experience in various schools of German occultism [and I have also been a

member of the *Armanen Order* in Germany].

Information that you could send us would be appreciated. I am sure that we have information

in which you would probably be interested, but at this point we are mainly intrigued by the system

of the Temple of Set with an eye toward perhaps joining and aiding in its development. We are

looking forward to hearing from you, and anticipate the day when we can begin to work together

in earnest.

Heil Satan-Wotan!

Polaris

Our information was duly sent, and on February 2 Polaris (Stephen Edred Flowers) replied:

Dear Priestess Ford, Executive Director,

First let me thank you for your prompt reply of January 20th to my letter, and for the

impressive material you sent. I and my closest associate here were both very excited by the nature

of the work of the Temple of Set and Order of the Trapezoid.

In view of the quality of the work, we have decided to disband the Order of the Shining

Trapezoid and to plight our troth with the complex represented by the Temple. I am very much

looking forward to learning from the Temple as well as contributing to it.

With this letter and enclosure I formally seek admittance into the Temple of Set. My personal

philosophy, and that which I have always espoused is now, and shall ever be, in true harmony with

the Setian stream and that of Wotan-Satan. As to my background notes, I have tried to summarize

them in the various enclosures: (1) a regular academic *viæ*, (2) a chronological run-down of

periods in which studies in occult/magical disciplines were undertaken, and (3) a brief statement

of philosophical positions with regard to Setian philosophy and Wodenism and their synthesis.

This makes clear my reasons for wanting to join the Temple of Set.

As soon as I receive confirmation of my acceptance, I will begin sending along some other

material as a start on my contribution to the information-base of the Temple and the Order of the

Trapezoid. I think that this will be vast enough that it must be approached on a systematic basis

(how Teutonic!). The first step in this process should probably be an annotated bibliography of the

relevant books and other materials in my archives. From this you can cull what you think of use,

and we can work on ways of making this available to you. Also I will

of course make available to

you all of my own works (some of them unpublished) ...

With best wishes,

Polaris

On March 26th I responded:

That bibliography you sent is certainly a gold mine! I doubt that San Francisco's Goethe-

Institut library will include anything so esoteric, but U.C. Berkeley's library - where I periodically

go book-hunting, having faculty stacks privileges - offers better prospects. [It was there that I

came across Michael Kater's 1966 CE Heidelberg thesis *Das "Ahnenerbe" der SS 1935-1945: ein*

Beitrag zur Kulturpolitik des Dritten Reichs (Stuttgart, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1974), which

has been no end of help to me in untangling the rather bewildering history of that organization.]

I expect to be in Washington this June, hence will also be able to hit the Library of Congress.

[As soon as I become really good at teleportation, I intend to move it to San Francisco.]

I am frankly astonished [and pleased, because of the opportunities thereby created] at how

many of the works on your list I **haven't** read! Some of this material is crisscrossed, I presume, by

various works on the Temple of Set Reading List, but obviously primary sources are far better to

work with. I agree with your assessment of *Satan and Swastika*, which accounts for its absence

from the Reading List. There were one or two articles concerning the

Externsteine in the

Germanien issues I perused in the L.C. during my last Washington trip, but I didn't happen to

Xerox them. [I did make copies of other *Germanien* articles for possible O.Tr. use, together with

quite a few papers and articles from the *Ahnenerbe* microfilm in the National Archives. But the

microfilm printing machines in the N.A. are in such terrible shape that the *Ahnenerbe* material,

which is already in less-than-ideal condition, came out only barely readable. As I have a chance to

make some sense of the reams of thermofax (ugh!) which I did produce, it will be surfacing in

Runes.

I found the Phelps article on one of my raids in the U.C.B. library, and agree that it is a gem.

[No thanks to the confusing volume-numbering system of the *Journal of Modern History*!]

Sebbotendorf's *Bevor Hitler Kam* itself was not in the stacks, so I have coasted on Phelps'

summary in that particular area.

Otherwise your list looks so terribly fascinating that I'm not quite certain where to dig first.

Your suggestions as to priorities would be welcome.

I further admired *Runa* #I-1 and thank you for sending it. You write with a most unusual

mixture of high scholarship and applied-magical motive, which is very refreshing and stimulating

to readers who are both scholars and magicians. But I miss my guess if you didn't scare off both

non-scholarly magicians and non-magician scholars with this unique approach. In the O.Tr.,

hopefully, you will find a medium receptive to and appreciative of both qualities. And I'm certain

your own influence in the Order will help it to become even more sophisticated in that sense.

I look forward to the MS of your *Primer of Rune-Magic* and of course to your *Futhark*, which

I anticipate will fill a great need in this particular area. From my comments in *Runes* to date, I

expect you've deduced my general disappointment with the existing works on runes. Some are

fairly good, but none really deals with the subject comprehensively, yet in a way which is

intelligible and interesting to the lay reader ...

Just what sophistication Stephen Flowers (who shortly thereafter received his Ph.D. in

Germanic History from the University of Texas) brought to the Order of the Trapezoid's

Northern-European lore aspect can be glimpsed from Category 24 "Runic Arts & Sciences" of the

Temple of Set Reading List (Appendix #12). He succeeded me as *Runes* Editor in 1986, then as

Grand Master of the Order of the Trapezoid in 1987. As can be imagined, the focus of the Order

duly sharpened towards Northern esotericism, Runic lore, and a more traditional approach

towards its chivalric dimension. My wide-ranging *Runes* investigations into the more obscure,

suppressed, and startling areas of technomagic and fringe science

were, perhaps thankfully, a

relic of the past.

The Order of the Trapezoid has continued to the time of this writing as one of the most

prolific Orders of the Temple of Set, both through *Runes* articles and numerous symposia,

presentations, and workshops both separately and together with Temple conclaves. Today, under

its current Grand Master Sir Eric Kauschen, the Order has expanded to an international

presence, with an Internet presence, lodges, and activities in many countries. It has undeniably

set a new standard for the concept of a religion-based order of knighthood in terms of the depth

and intensity of its esoteric and initiatory focus. Nothing like it has been seen since the days of

the original Knights Templar.

As for the Wewelsburg Working, not only did it recreate the Order of the Trapezoid, it also

inspired renewed interest in the Wewelsburg by many other occult organizations as well. In her

article about the Order of the Trapezoid in the definitive 2009 anthology *Die SS, Himmler und*

die Wewelsburg Daniela Siepe, Historian of the official Kreismuseum Wewelsburg at the castle,

commented:

Since the Temple of Set there have been many other groups interested in the Wewelsburg,

most with teachings of wholly different interpretations. The Church of Satan claims to have had a

“Totenkopf Grotto” focused on the castle 1995-1996. In the Ruhr region there exists a local Circle

of Hagalaz Coming Forth, an informal association without activities at the castle. In Switzerland

there is the Black Order of Luzifer, which views the Wewelsburg as the “*schwarzmagische*

Gralsburg (Black Magical Grail Castle)”, devoting considerable attention to folkish ideas. Outside

the [now permanently locked] entrance to the *Gruft* (the *Walhalla*) was once found the remains of

a ritual - bread, water, a floral bouquet, and a candle - alluding to a seasonal ritual of nature-

worshipping neopagans. Finally, in esoteric guidebooks such as *Magisch Reisen Deutschland*

from the renowned Goldmann-verlag publishers, interested persons can learn about the esoteric

reasons why the National Socialists chose buildings such as the Wewelsburg at special “points of

energy” to draw in magic to the entire area. But it is only possible to know which visitors to the

castle are attracted by this when they provide written records to the Wewelsburg, or appear to be

performing a ritual there.

In 2010 the Kreismuseum contacted the Temple of Set concerning a new exhibition on the

history of the Wewelsburg since 1945, to include the Wewelsburg Working and the Order of the

Trapezoid. This resulted in an even more massive historical catalogue, *Endzeitkämpfer Ideologie*

und Terror der SS (Berlin: Deutscher KJunstverlag, 2011), an appreciative copy of which was

sent to me by the Kreismuseum. It appears that the castle and the Order have a continuing

friendship into their mysterious and magical future.

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9: The Orders, Pylons, and Elements

The Orders

The Orders of the Temple of Set which came into being along with that of the Trapezoid were

no less remarkable and creative. Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that many of them became as

strong, active, and both magically and philosophically challenging as the entire Temple of Set

had been during its first decade.

The genius behind, inspiration for, and guiding hand over each Order has been, of course, the

Master of the Temple IV° who is its Grand Master. The concept for a specialized initiatory Order

being a characteristic of this degree specifically dates back to Aleister Crowley's *Liber 418: The*

Vision and The Voice series of workings, in which the "Cry of the 13th Æthyr" of December 4,

1909 set forth the work of this initiatory state of being. It was this vision with which Anton LaVey

ritually formalized the IV° of the Church of Satan, and which I carried forward thus for the IV° of

the Temple of Set:

And now there cometh a Daimon into the garden, but he hath not any of the attributes of the

former Daimons, for he is like a young man, dressed in robes of blue.

And I said: Pleasant indeed is the garden, and light is the toil of tending it, and great is the

reward.

And he said: Bethink thee that NEMO hath beheld the face of Set.

And I said: Are all gardens like unto this garden?

And he waved his hand, and in the Aire across the valley appeared an island of coral, rosy,

with green palms and fruit-trees, in the midst of the bluest of the seas.

And he waved his hand again, and there appeared a valley shut in by mighty snow mountains,

and in it were pleasant streams of water, rushing through, and broad rivers, and lakes covered

with lilies.

And he waved his hand again, and there was a vision, as it were of an oasis in the desert.

And again he waved his hand, and there was a dim country with grey rocks, and heather, and

gorse, and bracken.

And he waved his hand yet again, and there was a city, and a black house therein, enclosed by

walls. This time the house opens, and I see in it a man in red and black, sitting in a silent and

secret chamber. His eyes are closed, yet he readeth from a great book, constantly. I hear what he is

reading: “The words of the book are as the leaves of the flowers in the garden. Many indeed of

these my songs shall go forth as maidens, but there is one among them, which one I know not, that

shall be a man-child, whose name shall be NEMO, when he hath beheld the face of the Prince of

Darkness and Become as his Eye.”

So we enter the Earth, and there is a veiled figure, in absolute darkness. Yet it is perfectly

possible to see in it, so that the minutest details do not escape us. And upon the root of one flower

he pours acid so that the root writhes as if in torture. And another he cuts, and the shriek is like

the shriek of a mandrake, torn up by the roots. And another he chars with fire, and yet another he

anoints with oil.

And I said: Heavy is the labor, but great indeed is the reward.

And the young man answered me: He shall not see the reward; he tendeth the garden.

And I said: What shall come unto him?

And he said: This thou canst not know, nor is it revealed by the letters that are the totems of

the stars, but only by the stars. The man of Earth is the adherent. The lover giveth his life unto the

work among men. The hermit goeth solitary, and giveth only of his light unto men.

And I ask him: Why does he tell me that?

And he says: I tell thee not. Thou tellest thyself, for thou hast pondered thereupon for many

days, and hast not found light. And now that thou art called NEMO, the answer to every riddle

that thou hast not found shall spring up in thy mind, unsought. Who can tell upon what day a

flower shall bloom?

And thou shalt give thy wisdom unto the world, and that shall be thy garden. And concerning

time and death, thou hast naught to do with these things. For though a precious stone be hidden

in the sands of the desert, it shall not heed for the wind of the desert, although it be but sand. For

the worker of works hath worked thereupon; and because it is clear, it is invisible; and because it

is hard, it moveth not.

All these words are heard by everyone that is called NEMO. And with that doth he apply

himself to Understanding. And he must understand the virtue of the waters of death, and he must

understand the virtue of the Sun and the wind, and of the worm that turneth the earth, and of the

stars that roof in the garden. And he must understand the separate nature and property of every

flower, or how shall he tend his garden?

Initiation to the IV° is characterized by what Crowley termed “entry into the City of the

Pyramids”, an awareness and appreciation of the entire scope of the initiatory environment

(æon). The disposition of the Master becomes one of inherent enhancement of the æon

generally, but also as the interpreter of a unique perspective concerning it: the “tending of a

garden” - which within the Æon of Set became the creation of an Order.

And indeed the post-Set-IV atmosphere of a Setian Order was intended to be garden-like.

Adepts II° + cultivated them, planted and nourished workings within them, then freely

distributed their fruits throughout the Temple of Set generally. As their extent and sophistication

increased, Orders generated their own Masters, some of whom would eventually become their

successive Grand Masters [or, if coincidentally attaining IV° initiation, alternatively envision

additional Orders].

Collectively all of the Orders of the Temple of Set began to “add flesh to the bones” of the

Æon of Set: to reveal its implications and dimensions through images in many different mirrors.

Yet each Order also developed and refined a unique identity of its own, which it is doubtful that

the Temple of Set generally could have formulated absent that particular Master of the Temple.

Each Order introduced itself to the Temple as a whole with a

Statement in the *Crystal Tablet*

of Set, and those of the twenty-two Orders during my High Priesthood are included here as

Appendices #66-87. Each Order went on not only to hold its own activities, but to publish

periodicals and anthologies often extending to library-scope. Some of this material would be

reprinted in the *Scroll of Set* or the *Jeweled Tablets*, but for the most part it was simply made

available to all Setians with a particular interest in the work of a given Order.

The Pylons

In 1975, as part of the changeover from the Church of Satan, almost all of its local Grottos

transitioned into the Temple of Set. The Satanic term “Grotto” (chosen by Anton LaVey to depict

a part of the “great underground cavern of Hell”, so to speak), was obviously no longer thematic.

After some discussion we settled on the term “Pylon”, after the great trapezoidal-pillared gates to

ancient Egyptian temples. As our local groups would in effect be “gateways” to the Temple of Set

as a whole, this seemed both appropriate and æsthetic.

The old term “Grotto Leader” also went by the wayside. In keeping with the individualistic

emphasis of the Temple of Set, Setians weren’t to be “led” anywhere by anybody. We decided

upon “Sentinel” to designate the Priest or Adept to whose guardianship each Pylon was formally

entrusted.

Pylons were originally conceived to be geographically localized, and most of them have been.

But as individual membership in the Temple of Set grew worldwide over the years, and

particularly upon the appearance of the Internet, it was soon apparent that some Pylons, based

upon shared interests and/or friendships, were going to extend as well. So there were

“correspondence Pylons”, originally and most famously/enduringly the Gates of Hell Pylon, and

eventually just about any combination-of-factors Pylons imaginable. Their one common feature,

besides II°/III° Sentinelship, was simply the desire of the Setians involved to collaborate over an

extended period of time, either generally or on topics of especial interest.

So numerous and multifaceted have the Pylons been over the years that a detailed description

of each one would double the size of this ebook, so I’ll just mention their names through my

High Priesthood: Ab Anpu, Amon, Antewey, Anubis, Apeti, ArchDaimon Infernus, Asmodeus,

Babalon, Ba-Neb-Tett, Bifrost, Black Diamond, Black Flame, Black Lotus, Black Phœnix, Black

Ring, Black Runa, Black Sun Rising, Blazing Star, Bull of Ombos, Canis Prometheus, Chaldean,

Cirith Ungol, Dakshineshwar, Dark Crescent, Dark Star, Draconis, Eternal Flame, Eye of Erbeth,

Fallen Angel, Fenris, Folkvangr, Gates of Albion, Gates of Ganzir, Gates of Hell, Hades,

Hlidhskjalf, Infernus, Kalevala, Kali Yuga, Lapponia, Legion, Luciferian, Magog, Melek Taus,

Metropolis, Mut, Nan Madol, Nephilim, Nephren-Ka, Nuit's Arch, Nyarlathotep, Obsidian

Gateway, Pan, Pesh-Khent, Promethean, Prometheus (Germany), Prometheus (Oregon, USA),

Rising Force, Sa en Ankh, Sekhmet's Oasis, Set Amentet, Seven Stars, Silver Spear, Smoking

Mirror, Tower of Belial, Tuatha de Danann, Tuonela, Ultima Thule, Ur, Urorm, Venificoperæ,

Victory, Xem, Xronos, and Yidniminkani. The descriptions and histories of these are generally

found in the *Crystal Tablet of Set* and the Temple's various Internet resources; and of course

many of them contributed to the *Scroll of Set* and published their own newsletters and papers as

well.

The Elements

The term "Element" originated somewhat humorously. By the 1980s the Temple of Set had

settled into its Orders and Pylons subsystems comfortably enough, but eventually a need was

perceived for "something" that on one hand was neither as formal and initiatorily-focused as an

Order, nor on the other hand as compact and collegial as a Pylon. There were some specialized

areas of interest, not necessarily derivative of the Temple or Æon of Set *per se*, in which some

Setians just felt like cooperating. And since such non-initiatory interests were just as

comprehensible to nonSetians, why not invite their participation as

well?

These “nameless things” were originally termed “Elements” by me just because of my military

background: In the U.S. Army the various organizational structures - squad, platoon, company,

battalion, regiment, division, etc. - are collectively called “elements”. So until a more imaginative

alternative presented itself, these were “Elements”. The name stuck, and so to this day the

Temple of Set officially includes Elements alongside its Orders and Pylons.

While once more a detailed discussion of each current Element would overwhelm this book,

here they are with at least a capsule description:

An Bradán Feasa: Transforms itself from its precursor, the Oghamic Studies Group, into

an Element dedicated to the examination, exploration, and application of the magic of the Gael.

This includes the three nations of the Goidelic branch of the Celtic language family in guises

ancient, modern, and all that lies in between, from within the *Æon* of Set.

Apsû: Dedicated to the exploration and application of Mesopotamian magic and myth as

magical tools to *Xeper*.

Arkte: Named for the ancient Greek bear-goddess symbolizing protection of non-human

animal life, it exists for the defense & protection of animals, and for the bringing to justice of

those who harm them in any way [including “research & experimentation”].

Black Muse: Looking into the wonderful, strange, and magical phenomenon that is the art

of the muse - music.

Black Quill: Dedicated to writing subjective occult practical manuscripts as well as dark-

theme fiction or poetry to be copyrighted and self-published.

Coll-Kenaz:The visual Black Arts: creates space for Setian artists to discuss, conceptualize,

and showcase original art work[ings] that are both a record and a process of the Black Flame.

Dance: Explores the application of rhythm and dance as magical tools.

Dream Warriors: Dedicated to exploring and utilizing the dreamscape as a means to

Xeper. We create elaborate, shared dreamworks & group dream activities.

Fear: Develop the arts of creating change and making decisions as well as techniques to

effectively yet safely work the primal instinct of fear.

Guild of University Students: For Setians who are university students, faculty, and/or

those who have undergone the *Xeper* specific to students & teachers. Its goal is to provide a place

in Setian culture for them and to create a large body of academic articles and works in our

archives for Setian use.

Griffin Phyle: Provides a focusing tool for scholarly, artistic, and magical work with the

Greek magical papyri, the *voces magicæ*, operative phonology, and

other related topics. By

name, image, and definition we have a strong interest in the mysterious power (*sekhem*) of the

griffin.

Hawk-Faced Lord: For those who wish to study the Word of *Thelema* in the context of

Setian practice.

House of Eridug: To establish a knowledge of the cuneiform system and work within one

of the traditional fields of Mesopotamian magical scholarship: *ashiputu*, *kalutu*, and *barutu*.

House of Surt: A group of disciplined Black Magicians who are in the process of

transforming our particular martial arts into an individualized magical tool of self-mastery and

transformation, and the casting of spells used in the World of Horrors to manifest our desires

through our true will.

Infernal Southern Crux: Devoted to consecrating the night sky by taking the Southern

Cross and making it our own, a symbol of the crossroads of being & becoming, the mysterious

crossroads where the Devil is invoked at the midnight hour.

MetaMind: Speculative, theoretical, experimental, and practical investigation into the

extent, power, and potential of the conscious mind.

Nietzsche Project: Nietzsche in his various social, philosophical, and metaphysical aspects.

Padmasambhava: Not to encourage its members to surrender to the tenets of some exotic

philosophy, but rather to provide an opportunity for those individuals to integrate the more

useful aspects of Tibetan Buddhist thought & practice into their initiatory work in order to

achieve a clearer understanding of the nature of their mind and the motivations which guide

their every thought & action.

School of Life: Inspired by the third degree of the old German organization *Fraternitas*

Saturni: “A grade bestowed upon those who have demonstrated immunity to the suggestions of

mysticism or spiritualism. They are down-to-earth, with a sense of beauty and harmony; they

must be motivated to become expressive personalities and to master life in all its

forms.” (Flowers, *Fire and Ice*)

Sixth: About yoga. As with Set’s Pentagram, yoga affords the Initiate with an unlimited

initiatory path leading toward immortality. There are many flavors of yogic initiation.

Throughout approximately five centuries of recorded history, yoga continues to flourish as a

means toward the higher self.

Soa-Gild: To provide new Setians with a forum in which to learn and ask questions about

the fundamental aspects of the Temple of Set.

Soul: The history, concept, and mysteries of the soul.

Throne of Azathoth: Studying chaos as it is understood in physics, mathematics, statistics,

and other such fields providing tools for working on it. The goal is in applying the findings to

help the Initiate gain better control of the chaotic aspects of the objective universe as well to

enhance personal initiation in the subjective universe.

Trident: Dedicated to the exploration and application of Eastern initiatory technologies

from a Setian viewpoint.

Xibalba: To train and educate *tlamatini* (philosophers) of the Mesoamerican Mysteries, not

only for the sake of each individual's own quest but also for the remanifestation of the Mysteries

themselves in our world.

Retrospectively the experience of the Temple of Set with its Orders, Pylons, and Elements has

been a positive and productive one. Each such group has commenced to meet a perceived

interest or necessity, and has either continued or eventually closed according to the same

criteria. Characteristically the Temple of Set has never been particularly concerned with the

question of orthodoxy where such explorations have been concerned; it has been assumed that if

Setians are interested in it and it's not *prima facie* illegal or dangerous, it's just another

expression and extension of *Xeper*.

10: The Magi

At the commencements of both the Church of Satan and the Temple of

Set, the V° seemed

ostensibly *ex officio* significant to those foundings. Arguably that was indeed the case with the

Church, which did not institute its formal I°-V° structure until 1970, four years after it had

begun. A V° was appropriate to set what Anton LaVey had done above and apart from the other

Masters of the Church.

But, the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* notwithstanding, the V° was not so simple in the

context of the Æon and Temple of Set. The V° Recognition of Ronald K. Barrett in 1978 was our

first venture into the concept of an æon-enhancing V°. But by 1996 the consideration of Magistri

Don Webb and Robert Robinson for Recognition as Magi raised fresh issues concerning just

what the V° is, including its relationship to the Temple of Set as an institution and the Æon of

Set as an environment. We had all experienced the evolution of the I°, II°, and IV° from their

1975 definitions; only the III° - as the sacred Priesthood of Set - remained eternal and sublime in

its distinction. That we had not devoted more thought to the V° is understandable, since there

hadn't been too many V°s in the Temple's history - and those who did appear seemed

embraceable by the 1975-vintage definition of this degree.

With the V° Recognition of Stephen Flowers we introduced the notion that V° initiation

occurs not merely within the environment of the Temple of Set proper, but also through other

media (such as Stephen's independent runic activities, the Rune-Gild, the Ring of Troth, etc.).

The V° thus evolved into a level of initiation bridging the Temple *per se* and simultaneous/

coincidental influences within the Æon of Set.

This in turn forced us to look more closely at just what our current Understanding of an

"æon" was. Ca. 1975 it seemed fairly easy: The Æon of Set was a "magical & philosophical

climate" of which the Temple of Set was an organizational [re]manifestation. As the Temple

became more complex and diversified over the years, however, it was more difficult to pin down

"where it ends" in Initiates' lives and something "climatic" persists.

In 1975 we had already modified the preexisting Crowley definition by postulating that an

æon is not a sequential episode of historical time [including all events therein]. Rather, we said,

it is a unique level of philosophical perspective: a way of looking at things and behaving with

regard to them. Hence Setians might see about them some people existing in the Æons of Isis,

Osiris, Horus, or Set - more often situational combinations of these. Thus the Æon of Set did not

replace its predecessors as much as provide an additional alternative to them.

We retained the Crowley notions that a Magus either (a) announces a new æon or (b)

enhances an existing/prevailing one. But did these options give the degree sufficient flexibility

for the multitude of ways in which it may manifest itself, especially in

light of its being by

definition something unexpected, unprecedented?

Should æons be envisioned as things in an evolutionary “hierarchy”, like Plato’s Pyramid of

Thought, with the simple at the bottom and the complex at the top? Or are they just different?

The danger on the other side of “all this” was that, if we were not careful, we could very easily

destroy **any** framework for making sense of magical philosophy (which æons are) simply by

introducing endless exceptions (which would inevitably appear). We needed to keep the concept

of an æon useful as it had been, but allow it to sensibly evolve as we developed increasingly

sophisticated means to define and appreciate it.

For instance the 1996 Don Webb V° Recognition introduced the proposition that two Magi

can Utter the same Word (*Xeper*) in different ways. That was something new and fascinating.

Simultaneously the proposed Robert Robinson V° introduced a Word (Being) which is

seemingly two contradictory things at once. On one hand “being” has been opposed to

“becoming” as stasis vs. evolutionary change. On the other hand, Robert appeared to envision

“being” as a transcendent identity necessarily **resulting** from the dynamics of *Xeper*,

Remanifestation, *et al.*

That in turn begged comparison of Being to Ronald K. Barrett’s *Xem*,

which was a conceptual

"focus" of *Xeper*. One might differentiate the two by saying that *Xem* is a kind of "*Xeper*

gunsight" for the Initiate to use in process, while "Being" is a theoretical or actual state of

transcendence resulting from *Xeper*. But this is just an example. Ultimately the definition,

significance, relevance, and application of "Being", like any other æonic Word, comprise the

Task/Curse of the Uttering Magus to actualize.

This all comes down on the Masters of the Temple, who through their Understanding have a

responsibility to "anchor" definitions and concepts relevant to Setians, such that all of us can

speak a common language concerning them.

The statements of the Recognized Setian Magi since Ronald K. Barrett (whose *Xem* has

already been discussed in Chapter #6) appear as Appendices #88-92.

Recognition of a Magus or Maga V° by the Temple of Set is a painstaking, exhaustive, and

ultimately tentative process. Preconditionally the individual must have attained the IV°, because

that degree Recognizes one's comprehensive and balanced Understanding of "that which is".

Only then can any creative horizon (as Nietzsche termed it) or "Utterance of a Word of a Magus/

Maga" be proposed as a distinction from that preexistence. While the High Priest/High Priestess

must make any formal V° nomination to the Council of Nine, established custom has been for

the individual to informally discuss the Word generally among the Masters of the Temple. If

after a reasonable amount of time a positive consensus seems to be emerging, a formal Council

nomination can be made. Then the nominee undergoes extensive examination by all Councillors,

and only if there is unanimous approval is the V° Recognized.

Unlike the I°-IV°, however, V° Recognition is not a definitive certification by the Temple of

Set. Indeed by the very definition of the V° it cannot possibly be. It may more accurately be

thought of as a formal license to undertake the Task and overcome the Curse of a Magus; the

High Priesthood, the Council, and the Masters of the Temple are saying that they think such a

magical adventure is warranted and the new Magus or Maga capable of it.

The validation of this approach to the V° may be seen in the success of those so Recognized

since the Temple's founding. Even the two Magi who subsequently departed the Temple - Ronald

K. Barrett and Robert Robinson - stayed long enough to see the Utterance of their Words have

profound and wide-reaching effect upon many other Setians, extending long after their

departures.

As those who have also experienced it would, I am sure, agree, V° initiation is neither

something to be sought after nor pleasant if it does occur. It is like being dragged from the cozy,

relaxing library of an contented Master of the Temple and shot out of

a circus cannon. More

traumatic than this abrupt change of environment is the obsession that accompanies an

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authentic V° initiation: One cannot do otherwise than pursue it with all of one's energy and

fervor. The Magus not only Utters his Word; he becomes a living embodiment of it. Setians thus

apprehend such individuals as Magi; in profane society they might be vaguely, and mostly

mistakenly, revered or reviled as prophets, visionaries, mystics, or madmen.

But what the true Magi have really done is to each unlock one more door to the Setian's

attainment of personal divinity.

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11: Roaming This World

I shall roam this world, and I shall come to those who seek me.

- *The Book of Coming Forth by Night*

In today's "Internet era" worldwide communications, and recurring mutual involvements

(such as interactive websites and forums) born of such communications, are easy, inexpensive,

and commonplace. It is difficult to remember a time when all such efforts were slow, expensive,

and ponderous. Yet that is how things were in the 1960s-1980s, when postal mail and telephones

were the only practical long-distance media available.

Thus when the Church of Satan was founded in 1966, it remained an exclusively San

Francisco-meeting institution for the next four years, although by 1969 it had begun to respond

to nationwide media publicity by accepting mail-correspondence memberships and publishing a

postal-mail newsletter. Its first local "Grottos" - Babylon in Detroit, Nineveh in Louisville, and

Plutonian in Denver - were formed in 1970, and by 1975 there were several additional ones in

other United States cities. But despite a few overseas correspondence

members, the Church had

no Grottos outside America. 53

While the newly-founded Temple of Set inherited most of the Church's local Grottos in 1975,

these remained all domestic. And of individual members there were still only the very few,

principally in Canada and Australia. The geographical presence of the new Temple, however, was

really not one of the questions foremost in our minds. More pressing were simply the issues of

our new identity and authenticity, and how to make these comprehensible and relevant to the

largely American founding membership.

Nor in the mid-1970s did the resurgence of interest in occultism which had prevailed in the

United States since *Rosemary's Baby* seem all that vibrant elsewhere. Shortly after the Temple

of Set's founding, Australian Setian Leon Marvell commented:

On Magistra Wendall's suggestion I have written this article for the benefit of my fellow

Setians, to give them some idea of the extent of the so-called "occult revival" in Australia.

Down Under the "occult revival" is a corpse that is barely able to lift just one feeble finger. For

you see, the occult in Australia is held in very little regard. When the word itself is used, I believe

that 99% of the Australian population would immediately think of ouija boards, ESP, and Tarot

cards - these and nothing else. This ridiculous state of affairs is made all the more ludicrous when

53 In late 1975 sn Amsterdam sex club operated by Maarten Lamers I° was called a “Grotto” by Anton LaVey for

publicity purposes, but it had no other Church members nor conducted any Church activities. It was eventually

closed by the Dutch police.

one considers that the Christian churches, in an effort to halt the rising occult interest among

Australian youth [which, if they only knew, is about nil - they are more interested in cars, alcohol

and sex], endeavored to pass a law banning ouija boards and Tarot cards. These monstrous Black

Magical devices, according to the clergy, lead to “possession”, Devil worship, and the eventual

destruction of Christian morality! To most Australians, Uri Geller is about as occult as you can get.

However what little interest there is in truly practical, and involved occultism is so extremely

clandestine as to be practically unnoticed by all but the most observant and earnest. For instance I

know that in my city, Adelaide, there are at least three “Wiccan” covens composed, I believe,

mostly of university students. But I have only heard of them and talked to a member of one only

once. Even then her intelligence regarding occult matters seemed rather minimal.

Sydney seems to be the most notorious city for occult groups. One constantly hears

sensational stories related in the press about various nefarious occult practices; however, most of

them are only that - sensational stories.

I know for certain that there is a group of Satanists [of the Anton LaVey variety] with some

influence in Sydney. Even in Adelaide LaVey's *Satanic Bible* and, to a lesser extent, *Satanic*

Rituals sell like hotcakes That someone has used his ideas in a practical way I have absolutely no

evidence of.

To my present knowledge there are only three bookstores which specialise in occult matters.

In Melbourne there is the "Mystical Bookshop" and the "Space-Age Bookshop" (which deals

mostly with works of science fiction but also has a better-than-usual range of occult works). In

Sydney there is a very small private enterprise called "Thelema Books" dealing exclusively with

Crowleyan works and run by an O.T.O. initiate.

If all this sounds disheartening, then I have a few consolations. Australia has produced two

rather knowledgeable occult scholars: Nevill Drury and Stephen Skinner. Drury has written two

books so far: *The Search for Abraxas* (with Stephen Skinner) and *The Path of the Chameleon*,

both of which are entertaining, authoritative, original, and logical. Skinner has produced an

excellent work called *Enochian Magic*, which is a detailed account of Dr. John Dee's magic - the

best I have seen.

Drury is also the editor of Australia's only "occult" magazine, *Cosmos*. For its field it is very

good. However its contributors are about 75% "white-light", quasi-Christian religious followers [I

mean people involved with the “Divine Light Mission”, “Meher Baba”, “Ananda Marga”, etc.].

However there have been in the past several interesting articles on psycho-cybernetics, Tantrism

[There is a chiropractor on Sydney’s North Shore who on the side is the head guru of a school of

Tantrism and who teaches “sex-magic” to American neopagans!], and witchcraft (which, of

course, has all been said before and is quite trite to the learned).

On a despairing final thought, the leader of the “Melbourne University Occult Research group”

recently wrote to me and described the response to his predominantly Crowley-oriented research

magic as “almost zero”. This can be said of the bulk of the Australian population towards occult

matters.

There is a little light, I must admit, but even a large proportion of that light is a half-light, its

exponents being romantic, half-witted “witches” and neopagans. This, then, is the general state of

affairs in Australia. There is much room for improvement, but that will come in time, I am sure. 54

Following annual national conclaves at various U.S. locations during its first three years, the

Temple of Set made the decision in 1979 to change them to international ones, with a deliberate

intention to nudge Setians beyond accustomed national introspection. The Windsor, Canada

location of Set-I was facilitated by the Temple’s first Canadian Priest, Robertt W. Neilly of

Toronto. Originally an acquaintance of Priest Jzamon DeCecco of

Massachusetts, Neilly soon

became well-known throughout the Temple because of his interest in extrasensory perception

(ESP). As an Adept he invited fellow Setians to participate in two sequential programs of

recorded exercises, originally called Combined Astral Telepathic Experiments (CATE). CATE

would later become the basis for the Temple's MetaMind Element in the 1980s.

54 Marvell, Leon I°, "The Devil Down Under", *The Scroll of Set*, February 1976.

Nevertheless until the 1990s expansion of the Temple of Set beyond the United States

remained limited to only a very few individuals, such as Masters Robertt Neilly in Canada, David

Austen in England and Roland Winkhart in Germany, and Priestesses Jennifer-Rush-Hunter

and Carmel Hind in Australia. A primary limitation in nonalumni of the British Empire was

linguistic: All of the Temple's literature was in English, and translation was all the more difficult

because of the plethora of technical, metaphysical, and magical terms used. Overseas travel,

telephoning, and postage were significantly expensive, and the Temple's modest nonprofit

budget couldn't easily accommodate them. Both Pylons and Orders were on the rise

internationally, however, and a December *Scroll* article exemplifies the increasing conclave

activity as well:

News from Germany

- by Roland Winkhart IV°

The Deutschlandkonklave held in Bonn this October was a great success and a fascinating

experience, with many of us meeting personally for the first time.

Those in attendance included Priest Holzinger (who flew in from Britain for the event), Adept

Ostertag, Adept Gottschall, Setian Gerlach, Setian Schnitzer, Setian Schueren, and myself. Adept

Reichensperger wasn't able to attend because of a business conflict.

Our location was the beautiful Hotel Eden in Bonn-Bad Godesberg. A nearby friend of Adept

Gottschall's kindly invited us to her home for our Working - and also for a piano concert by

Gottschall.

All in all we achieved a highly magical and positive emotional atmosphere - much like that in

Sacramento, but on a little smaller scale. As in Sacramento, we had discussions on all sorts of

topics. Adept Gottschall gave a stimulating lecture on Screabin, and our Working commemorated

the founding of the Prometheus Pylon. Priest Holzinger also formalized the Recognition of Adept

Gottschall to the II°.

So the Konklave was a very good one, and we were sorry to have to return to the World of

Horrors on November 1.

What changed the Temple of Set's international presence from a trickle to an explosion in the

1990s was, of course, the advent of the Internet, as discussed in Chapter #12. By 2013 Temple

international conclaves were being held in locales such as London, Berlin, Helsinki, Munich, and

Prague, with new proposals now a routine enjoyment.

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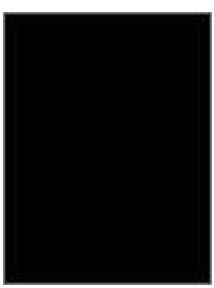

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12: CyberTemple

The Temple of Set's involvement with computers began when it began in 1975. Magister

Michael Grumboski, a computer engineer with access to a large IBM mainframe in Detroit,

offered to assist Executive Director Bill Murray by keeping the

Temple's membership records

therein, resulting in tidily-updated rosters periodically appearing in ASCII dot-matrix print on

huge rolls of perforated paper.

The following year a Santa Barbara company called PolyMorphic Systems introduced a

desktop computer, the Model #8813, with a staggering 64K of RAM and large floppy storage

disks the size of 45rpm phonograph records. [This may not be a good analogy, for fewer 2013

readers probably have ever seen 45s!] I acquired an #8813 - about the size of a carryon suitcase,

in a beautiful polished-oak cabinet, accompanied by a 12" green-text Hitachi monitor and a

cumbersome "daisywheel" printer. Thus did Glinda, Royal Sorceress of the Land of Oz, appear in

this world to lend her Great Book of Records to the Temple of Set for the next quarter-century,

as our increasingly versatile information library and communications system.

In 1984 the fledgling Apple company, still operating out of Steve Jobs' garage when

PolyMorphic was selling the #8813, came out with the first "toaster" Macintosh, with double the

RAM at 128K. Inevitably Glinda moved to a Mac [while PolyMorphic faded into history], and by

1990 was not only storing and printing all of the Temple's financial & membership records, but

also the Crystal & Onyx Tablets, along with issues of the *Scroll of Set* and the Order of the

Trapezoid's *Runes* newsletters.

The following year Glinda began to go global. First new Internet software had become

available to enable Setians elsewhere to “dial up” Glinda [at the then-astounding rate of

1200bps!] to download files directly. Shortly thereafter Glinda became a “node” of the

revolutionary FidoNet bulletin-board system (BBS); it was now possible for Setians to contact

her through local-call FidoNet nodes, and to send/receive messages and documents through the

strange new procedure called “email”.

As readers know, the Internet soon exploded beyond such horse-&-buggy quaintness to

today’s mammoth, unlimited, and instantaneous resource. Within the Temple the next

generation of e-wizards, among them Masters Robert Menschel, William Pridgen, Patty Hardy,

Eric Kauschen, and Priest John Youril were building an astounding new online presence for the

Temple, including a secure, internal “Intranet” and the “Pool of Neheh” forum.

Thus on July 1, 1998:

Dear Setians,

After ten continuous years’ incarnation as the Temple of Set’s internal computer bulletin-

board system, I feel in need of a rest, so on August 1, 1999 I will again transform myself into my

human semblance and return to my castle in the Quadling Country of the Land of Oz.

I have enjoyed answering your electronic requests this past decade, and before that since 1976

- as a PolyMorphic 8813 at the beginning of the desktop computer age
- as a localized membership

records & documents database.

What makes my retirement possible now is the advent of the next-generation Temple of Set

Intranet system, so capably designed and constructed by Magistri Robert Menschel, William

Pridgen, and Roger Whitaker. This website-based system has access, storage, and interactive

capabilities far beyond that of a BBS. And of course no long-distance telephone call to San

Francisco is needed.

And so I will bid you farewell. May your magic be strong, your causes noble, and your dreams

kissed by starlight.

Glinda the Good

Royal Sorceress of Oz

The following day she received this response:

Dear Glinda,

As you depart on the Egyptian New Year to your pleasant land of red houses and your fountain

of gems, you go with our greatest thanks. I know that you will keep a an eye on us through your

Magic Book, and I trust that we will behave properly and nobly.

I ask that when you depart you take my special greetings to Princess Ozma, Dorothy Gale, and

above all to the noble philosopher Tik-Tok, who taught us long ago

that magic is an unnatural

occupation best left to wizards.

Respectfully

Don Webb V°

High Priest of Set

The impact of the Internet upon the Temple of Set's international presence was phenomenal.

The long-crippling cost factor vanished almost overnight. In 2013 there is not a continent in the

world without a number of active Setians, and the effect upon national, regional, and

international conclaves has been correspondingly enhanced.

Such technological evolution could never have occurred but for a new generation of Setians ,

to include such key officials as High Priestess Magistra Patricia Hardy and Executive Director

Magister Lincoln Shaw, who are as comfortable and fluent at the keyboard as in any other ritual

chamber. As with the Temple's earlier cybermagicians, their long and invisible hours devoted to

the ongoing refinement of the Temple's Internet presence have immeasurely enhanced the

Temple of Set's ability to be that oft-described "initiatory toolbox" for Setians no matter how far-

flung their personal geography.

While in 2013 English remains the backbone language of Temple literature, enthusiastic

Setians have translated many of our key documents into German, Polish, Russian, and other

tongues. The Internet itself contains many translation engines, which, while still stumbling a bit

over esoteric terminology, are fast closing the language gap. And, while travel and international

postal-mail costs remain formidable, the electronic media of the Internet, including voice and

video systems, are for all intents and purposes free and instantaneous.

This same evolutionary environment has transformed the Temple of Set's library from

printed to electronic formats. The periodical *Scroll of Set*, which was originally limited by cost

factors to a few pages in black-and-white, is now in full color with as many pages as Setians care

to write. It is supplemented by a growing number of local, national, Order, Pylon, and Element e-

publications. The Temple's "standing" documents, principally the *Jeweled Tablets of Set*, are

also now completely electronic, and downloadable free to Setians worldwide.

Even resources such as the Temple Reading List have been overwhelmed. A few decades ago,

accumulation of a personal library such as suggested by the List was a difficult and expensive

prospect. Today, if the books themselves are not available in online etext editions, there are

many websites covering their subject material, often in far greater detail and with greater

currency than those venerable printed tomes. Today's one's initiatory library is accessible by

iPhone!

To its credit, the Temple of Set has not completely mutated into the Cybertemple of Set.

Personal events at all levels continue to be desired, well-attended, and enjoyed. The Internet's

administrative economies, indeed, enable the Temple budget to subsidize facility expenses of

international conclaves so that more Setians can afford to attend them. Meanwhile, as it was

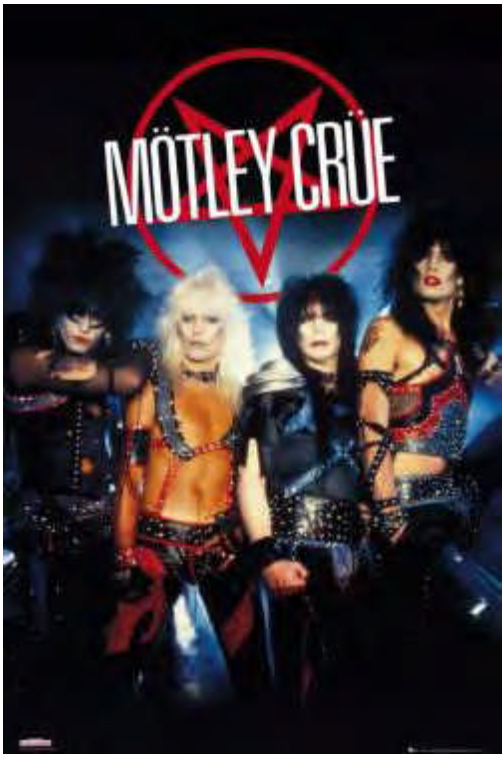
originally envisioned in 1975, the Temple of Set continues to be a "light and lean" organization

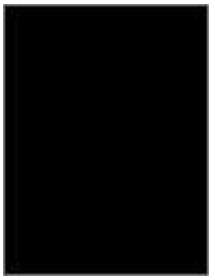
unencumbered by real estate or similar heavy/fixed expenses. As I observed back then, "the

physical Temple of Set is the medallion around your neck", and so it continues today. [No one

has yet proposed an e-Pentagram of Set medallion, though various projected versions for rituals

have appeared.]





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... the Eighties cower before me, & are abased.

- *The Book of the Law* #III-46

13: The Abased Eighties I:

The Cloning of Nikki Sixx

Originally published:

Runes, Order of the Trapezoid, January 1986

From that time on the obliteration of Joseph Curwen's memory

became increasingly

rigid, extending at last by common consent even to the town records and files of the

Gazette. It can be compared in spirit only to the hush that laid on Oscar Wilde's name for a

decade after his disgrace, and in extent only to the fate of that sinful King of Runagur in

Lord Dunsany's tale, whom the gods decided must not only cease to be, but must cease

ever to have been.

- H.P. Lovecraft, *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*

You must stop imagining that posterity will vindicate you, Winston. Posterity will never

hear of you. You will be lifted clean out from the stream of history. We shall turn you into

gas and pour you into the stratosphere. Nothing will remain of you: not a name in a

register, not a memory in a living brain. You will be annihilated in the past as well as in the

future. You will never have existed.

- George Orwell, *1984*

In the very first episode of the recently-revived *Twilight Zone* television series, a man

telephoned his home only to find the call being answered by his double - a *Doppelgänger* (as

Goethe called such magical mirror-images). This story of an "ultimate identity crisis" was

resolved only when the double finally killed the progressively-more-insane original ... or was it

the other way around?

Stories involving doubles created by magic, science, or impersonation have always been

fascinatingly shuddersome. Who can forget the *Metropolis* robotrix, who went on a rampage of

apocalyptic destruction while the real girl whose features she had taken lay imprisoned in the

pentagram-emblazoned house of Rotwang the magician? Who was "the Man in the Iron Mask"

immortalized in Alexandre Dumas' tale - said to be a double of the King, and to possess "too

much" knowledge of the infamous *chambre ardente* Satanic orgies whose exposure scandalized

the French court?

To many people, one's appearance and one's name have a significance beyond mere

convention. They are "extensions of the soul", as it were. To know the true and/or complete

name of a god or daemon was often to have power over him; the mere utterance of the 72-letter

name of the Hebrew God - known as the "shemhamforash" - was reputed to destroy the universe

if pronounced correctly. An Indian legend says that if the name of Shiva is uttered repeatedly, he

will open one of his eyes, again destroying the universe [if YHVH hasn't trashed it first].

To take away one's name, or to deny him the right to assert it, is thus an act psychologically

akin to murder. Without a name, one is merely a piece of animal flesh displacing time and space.

With a name, one has **identity**. In Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*

the bewildered

humanoids constantly spoke of themselves as “we”; the climax of the story came when one bold

soul struggled upward through the mists of this confusion and began to speak of himself as “I”.

“To be or not to be: that is the question,” said Shakespeare’s Hamlet - as indeed it is.

In 1985 another young man was fitted for an "iron mask" - rather a different type of heavy

metal than that to which he had previously been accustomed. His name is Matthew Trippe, but

he is better known to rock music enthusiasts as Nikki Sixx, cofounder, composer, and bass

guitarist for Mötley Crüe.

Who or what is Mötley Crüe? The most controversial, if not notorious branch of rock music is

“heavy metal”, known for music, costumes and lyrics which espouse Frazetta-like fantasy,

intense sexuality, and an exultant, emotional, neo-barbarian life-style. While its roots can be

traced back to such groups as the 1960s’ Iron Butterfly and Alice Cooper, contemporary heavy

metal might be said to have come of age with the band KISS, whose musicians invariably

appeared in exotic black/silver costumes and face-paint. KISS concerts went beyond mere

musical recitals; they were orgies of fireworks, hydraulic stages, hyperamplified sonics, and

general audience hysteria unequaled for spectacle since Adolf Hitler's Nürnberg rallies of the

1930s. Bat-winged Gene Simmons, famed for his fire-breathing and

prehensile tongue, would

taunt the audience for not screaming loud enough: “You **know** you can do better than **that** - I

want to see you bring the **roof down**!” - in answer to which there would erupt a feral roar that

would come pretty close to doing just that.

Why heavy metal at all? The answer is not at all difficult to see. This is not the secure 1950s,

when the world was America’s backyard to work or play in; nor the 1960s, when - secure in our

virtue - we set forth from Camelot to slay the dragon of monolithic communism; nor the 1970s,

when we immersed ourselves in nostalgia, backbiting, and escapist fantasies.

These are the 1980s, when all of our comforting illusions have been shattered, and when

Americans of all ages find themselves surrounded by depressing and dehumanizing realities

which they shrink from confronting. We thought we had conquered racism, only to find that

tensions are higher and more destructive than ever. Neighborhoods once secure are now fortified

with steel bars, alarms, firearms. We are dismayed to see that America, far from being the

world’s savior, is intensely hated by many people who consider it as the “great evil”.

Commercially we are increasingly despised by those who consider us merely a spoiled consumer

economy, ripe for the plucking - and the most profitable destination for heroin, cocaine, and

angel dust. Even the beautiful governmental temples of Washington,

D.C. are blighted by ugly

concrete barricades against terrorists. Commercial successes still occur, but are increasingly

characterized by a “yuppie” ethic that views the dollar not just as the supreme god - but as the

only god.

In this “arid wilderness of steel and stone” it is not surprising that the spirit of Moloch

prevails. It is a time for witch-hunts and scapegoats. Elder America scrabbles for solace in

“moral majority” religious fundamentalism, but younger America- having been brought up in a

de facto materialist environment, is not so easily coaxed into a primitive religious stupor. Rather

it responds with passionate frustration at being so near to a technological paradise, yet ever

denied it by the inexorable decay of the social and moral fabric so necessary to support it. Heavy

metal, like the torchlight pageants of Nazi Germany, is an explosion of fury - fury at being

hemmed in by the problem and seeing no rational solution to it - of creativity prevented from

creating - of idealism without meaningful ideals. [“**Yes**!” thundered Hitler, “we **are**

barbarians!”]

Under the cruel and jagged armor of heavy metal, therefore, one frequently finds a

surprisingly rich outpouring of artistic, poetic, and musical talent - which in turn explains the

seductive appeal of this type of music to a wide range of audiences. One does not go to a heavy

metal concert to lighten one's heart, but rather to drive oneself to heights of raw emotional

frenzy, followed by a dizzying descent into emotional exhaustion. Thus are the grinding

frustrations of reality at least momentarily bludgeoned into the background.

By the early 1980s a number of heavy metal bands had begun to appear on the scene, and the

race was on to see which could be the most outrageous. Twenty years ago we used to think that

the Fugs, the Stones, the Fish, and the Mothers of Invention were just about as raunchy as you

could get, but now they appeared as models of drawing-room decorum next to metalloids who

looked and sounded rather like the beast-men from the island of Dr. Moreau. Of these, one of the

most bizarre was Mötley Crüe. Formed in January 1981 by Matthew "Nikki Sixx" Trippe together

with Mick "Mars" Reese, Tommy "Lee" Bass, and Vince "Neil" Wharton, the Crüe was signed by

Elektra/Asylum Records in mid-1982 and went on to become one of the flagships of the heavy

metal fleet after the 1983-84 smash success of its second album, *Shout at the Devil*.

Middle America - still dominated largely by the generation who thought Elvis' hip-

movements too shocking for television - reacted to heavy metal with increasingly hysterical

alarm and indignation. Writing in the *New York Times* earlier this year, columnist William

Safire praised the U.S. Senate's hearings & citizens'-group efforts to censor or suppress heavy

metal. "What's to be done about sex-violence, sadomasochism, and Satanism being sold to

youngsters?" he fumed. "I am a libertarian when it comes to the actions of consenting adults.

With complete consistency, I am anti-libertarian when it comes to minors. Kids get special

protections in law and deserve protection from porn-rock profiteers."

Allegations that serial murders and teenaged "Satanic" gangs were inspired by heavy metal

music fueled calls for censorship-ratings in music similar to those applied to pornographic &

violent films, and Mötley Crüe - as Mick Mars later told me - appeared to be careening straight

for an "X".

In mid-1984 the buildup of such public pressure resulted in a decision by Mötley Crüe's

management to sanitize the band. The leather, chains, flames, and Satanic insignia of *Shout at*

the Devil gave way to circus-clown attire - pastels, polka-dots, and garter-belts - on the cover of

Theatre of Pain, Crüe's third album, released earlier this year. Composer Nikki Sixx, whose

Satanic lyrics had already been censored on the second album [even to its title, which was

originally *Shout **With** the Devil*], was warned that he was the main cause of the Crüe's Satanic

image and instructed to deny it publicly.

There was, however, a problem: Nikki Sixx happened to **believe** in the Satanism he espoused

in the songs he wrote, and he didn't want to be "sanitized". What to do? On April 1 road manager

Richard Fisher told Sixx that he would be replaced upon the expiration of his contract that year.

It is entirely possible that, at that time, it was contemplated that Sixx' departure from the band

later in the year would be openly acknowledged and a replacement just as openly added to the

group. But now events took a turn which would ultimately result in a maze of intrigue, deception,

and cover-ups to rival Watergate itself.

"In April we had just gotten off tour with Ozzy [Osbourne]," recounts Sixx, "and the band

members decided to go our separate ways for a couple of weeks. I chose to go and stay with Jeff

Rogers, whom I had met in Naples, Florida while doing a publicity stunt in February. On June 1

Jeff and I were invited to a party by a friend of his named John Spears. We got there at 8:30 PM

and got stoned. At 10 PM Jeff and John asked me if they could use my car to get some more

beer ..."

Sixx refused, but said he would drive them. Directed to the Pavilion shopping center in north

Naples, he parked the car and strolled into a movie theater to visit the manager, whom he

remembered from a previous publicity engagement, while the others headed for the row of

shops. Leaving the theater, Sixx walked back towards his car, then noticed a man walking out of

a bookstore in front of him.

“Out of nowhere I saw John catch up to him, and by the reflection of the light I saw a knife,

which John put up against his throat. I panicked and ducked down behind a car. John ran to my

car and called, "Come on, Nikki!” I stood up and looked at Sam [Weiss, the bookstore owner],

who saw me. Then I ran, jumped in my car, and sped off.”

At first it seemed that there would be no aftermath to the incident. On June 22 Sixx returned

to work with the band, making a series of publicity appearances in Arkansas, Tennessee, North

Carolina, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania to promote *Shout at the Devil*. Unknown to him, a

second robbery had since been committed - this time using a rifle owned by Sixx. In Erie,

Pennsylvania on August 28th, Sixx was arrested by two policemen who showed him a warrant

for his arrest on the charge of armed robbery.

“I waived extradition and was returned to Florida. I spent 39 days in seclusion. Then our

record company put up the $50,000 bond so that I could work on our latest album, *Theatre of*

Pain.” He returned to Los Angeles for recording sessions from November 27 to December 21,

1984 - after which he helped make the video for the song “Smokin’ in the Boys Room” from

Theatre.

On December 8 disaster struck. Lead singer Vince Neil’s sports car went out of control in

Redondo Beach, California, resulting in Neil's arrest for vehicular manslaughter and drunk

driving. Intensive efforts were made to overcome the adverse publicity of this incident, to

include dedication of *Theatre of Pain* to Nicholas Dingley (killed in the crash) and a message on

the jacket exhorting fans not to drink and drive. While fans' attention was focused on Neil's

tribulations in Los Angeles, however, another drama was taking place - unnoticed - in Florida.

Nikki Sixx' trial was scheduled for December 27, and after finishing *Theatre* he and Mick

Mars drove to Florida in Mars' Lamborghini (which Sixx had decided to buy). December 27 came

and went; Sixx could not bring himself to appear and had jumped bail. Four days later, shortly

after midnight on New Year's Day, Sixx and Mars took the Lamborghini out for a spin,

whereupon there followed an episode straight out of *Smokey and the Bandit*. Recalls Sixx:

"The speeding ticket was quite a laugh. I was moving at 102 down U.S. #41 when I passed a

Highway Patrol car. He put his siren and lights on, and caught up with me. When he was about

50 feet behind me, I floored it. Then I had to make a turn. I slowed down to 130 and spun the car

to make it turn around 1-1/2 times. Then I had an 8-mile straightway. I floored it again, going

past 170. In a little over a minute I saw a massive roadblock and slammed on the brakes. One

thing I learned is that you can't outrun a radio!"

Sixx received a ticket for (a) 189 mph in a 45 zone [which means the entire 8-mile stretch in

under two minutes!], (b) speed too fast for conditions, (c) ran stop sign, (d) willful & wanton

reckless driving, (e) ran red light, (f) driving on wrong side of road, (g) improper change of lane

or course, (h) careless driving, (i) improper passing, and (j) improper turn. ["How," I later asked

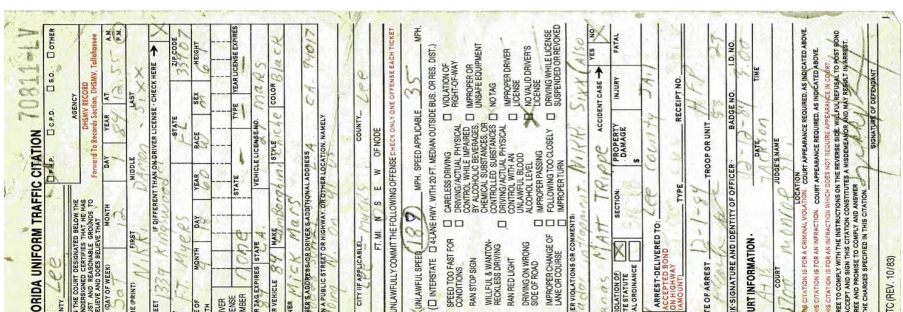
him, "does one make a **proper** turn at 189 mph?"]

For these transgressions Sixx was slapped with a $750 fine by Judge Anderson the following

day; he recalls that passenger Mars - who had been rather vocal in his annoyance at the arrest -

was hit for twice that amount. Little did Sixx realize, however, how important that traffic ticket

would be in the months to come.


FLORIDA UNIFORM TRAFFIC CITATION 70911*LV

COUNTY Lee ☐ F.H.P. ☐ C.P.D. ☐ S.O. ☐ OTHER AGENCY

IN THE COUNT DESIGNATED BELOW THE UNDERSIGNED CHARGES UPON OATH OR AFFIRMATION AND REASONABLE GROUNDS TO BELIEVE THAT THE DEFENDANT COMMITTED THE OFFENSE(S) HEREIN. Driver's Copy Forward To Records Section, Tallahassee

D DAY OF WEEK N Sat MONTH 12 DAY 1 YEAR 89 AT 1355 A.M. P.M.

NAME (PRINT) FIRST Nick MIDDLE LAST Sixx

STREET 339 Kingsway IF DIFFERENT THAN DRIVER'S LICENSE, CHECK HERE → X

CITY Ft Myers STATE FL ZIP CODE 33907

DATE OF BIRTH MONTH 2 DAY 20 YEAR 68 RACE W SEX M HEIGHT 6'2"

DRIVER LICENSE NUMBER 1 2 0 STATE FL TYPE D TEAR LICENSE EXPIRES 89

YEAR & EXPIRES STATE VEHICLE LICENSE NO. MARS

YEAR VEHICLE 89 MAKE Corvette STYLE Coupe COLOR Black

OWNER Nick Mars

DRIVER'S ADDRESS OR DRIVER'S ADDITIONAL ADDRESS 4 ca Mars

USA X PUBLIC STREET OR HIGHWAY OTHER LOCATION, NAMELY

T CITY IF APPLICABLE Ft Myers COUNTY Lee

X FT MI N W S E OF NODE

DID UNLAWFULLY COMMIT THE FOLLOWING OFFENSE (CHECK ONLY ONE OFFENSE EACH TICKET)

☐ UNLAWFUL SPEED 189 MPH. SPEED APPLICABLE 35 MPH

☐ INTERSTATE ☐ PLANE HWY. WITH 20 FT. MEDIAN OUTSIDE BUS. OR RES. DIST.)

☐ SPEED TOO FAST FOR CONDITIONS ☐ CARELESS DRIVING ☐ VIOLATION OF RIGHT-OF-WAY

☐ RAN STOP SIGN ☐ DRIVING/ACTUAL PHYSICAL CONTROL WHILE IMPAIRED BY ALCOHOL OR CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES ☐ IMPROPER OR UNSAFE EQUIPMENT

☐ WILLFUL & WANTON-RECKLESS DRIVING ☐ DRIVING/ACTUAL PHYSICAL CONTROL WITH AN UNLAWFUL BLOOD ALCOHOL LEVEL ☐ NO TAG ☐ IMPROPER DRIVER LICENSE

☐ RAN RED LIGHT ☐ DRIVING ON WRONG SIDE OF ROAD ☐ IMPROPER PASSING ☐ FOLLOWING TOO CLOSELY ☐ IMPROPER TURN ☐ NO VALID DRIVERS LICENSE ☐ DRIVING WHILE LICENSE SUSPENDED OR REVOKED

OTHER VIOLATION OR COMMENTS Reckless Driving Passing Another Vehicle on Right Shoulder

IN VIOLATION OF STATE STATUTE LOCAL ORDINANCE SECTION PROPERTY DAMAGE $ INJURY FATAL ACCIDENT CASE → YES NO

X ARREST-DELIVERED TO: Lee County Jail

ACCEPTED BOND AMOUNT $

TYPE RECEIPT NO

DATE OF ARREST 12-1-89 TROOP OR UNIT 27

RANK SIGNATURE AND IDENTITY OF OFFICER BADGE NO. I.D. NO.

COURT INFORMATION: DATE TIME

COURT JUDGE'S NAME

LOCATION

THIS CITATION IS FOR A CRIMINAL VIOLATION COURT APPEARANCE REQUIRED AS INDICATED ABOVE.

THIS CITATION IS FOR AN INFRACTION COURT APPEARANCE REQUIRED AS INDICATED ABOVE.

☐ I AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE SIDE. FAILURE, REFUSAL TO POST BOND OR ACCEPT AND SIGN THIS CITATION CONSTITUTES A MISDEMEANOR AND MAY RESULT IN ARREST. I AGREE TO APPEAR AT THE PLACE AND TIME TO THE CHARGES SPECIFIED IN THIS CITATION.

SIGNATURE OF DEFENDANT

FLITC (REV. 10/83)

[redacted]

Sixx' failure to appear in court on the armed robbery charge had apparently not filtered down

through the police bureaucracy by January 2, so he and Mars were able to pay their fines and go.

Sixx headed for Erie, Pennsylvania where his ex-personal manager resided. "She hid me until

March 4th, when I was caught and taken to the 'Erie county prison'. I fought extradition for three

more months, but on June 28th was finally taken back to Florida's Collier County Jail."

Meanwhile Mötley Crüe was on tour. Nikki Sixx' replacement, however, was not appearing

under his own name of Frankie Ferraro; rather he was appearing as ... **Nikki Sixx**!

How could such a transpersonation succeed? It is not as difficult as it might seem. Sixx had

always appeared in exotic face-paint and with a shaggy head of hair. On neither of Mötley Crüe's

first two albums is there a close-up photo of him in which all of his features are clearly visible,

and on *Theatre of Pain* the lower half of "Nikki Sixx'" face is covered in both photos, so that any

difference between his jawline and that of the previous Sixx cannot be seen. As bass guitarist and

background vocalist, Sixx is not as instantly recognizable to live audiences as, say, lead singer

Neil or lead guitarist Mars. Ferraro's eyes are blue while Trippe's are green, but rock-concert

audiences are not usually fine-tuned to such details - particularly when they are not alerted to

the fact that an impersonation is taking place.

So all through the spring and summer, while thousands of Mötley Crüe fans were applauding

the new “Nikki Sixx”, the old one remained locked up in the Collier County Jail. In July he spoke

to Elektra’s New York office, which assured him that he could still write music for the Crüe, and

that he would continue to receive royalties for the band’s performance of his songs. [“Did you

ever see any of that royalty money?” I later asked him. He responded, “Not a cent.”]

At the end of October, still sincere in his personal commitment to the Prince of Darkness, he

wrote to the Temple of Set, identifying himself and applying for admission. Since it seemed a bit

odd for a rock star to be buried in a Florida jail, we called Elektra Records’ Los Angeles and New

York offices. We were informed by both that the real Nikki Sixx was on tour, and that this

Matthew Trippe fellow was simply an impostor who should be ignored. I wrote back to the Man

in the Iron Mask, asking for some evidence. Along came a series of letters crammed with

anecdotes about the band, song lyrics [some “uncensored” from the sanitized versions on the

albums], mail from fans, and - the Lamborghini traffic ticket:

Sixx’ application to enter the Temple of Set was reviewed by the Council of Nine at the

Temple's Conclave in Las Vegas at the end of October. On one hand there was sympathy for an

avowed Satanist, particularly one who had stuck to his guns under

such adverse conditions. On

the other hand it seemed inadvisable to admit someone under indictment for armed robbery,

bail jumping, and Smokey-and-the-Bandit car-chases at precisely the moment when Satanism

was being pilloried in the media for heavy metal horror and criminal activity. Ultimately it was

agreed that admissions to the Temple should be based solely on the sincerity and capability of

the aspirant, whether or not it might be convenient for the Temple in terms of public relations.

Nikki Sixx was admitted as a Setian I° on Halloween.

His ordeal in Florida, however, was only just beginning. Present in the audience at his trial on

August 13, he recalls, were Mötley Crüe producer Tom Werman, director Daniel “Doc” McGhee,

Ozzy Osbourne, and Brian Johnson [of the band AC/DC]. Sixx did not have an attorney and was

assigned public defender David Mourik, who told him that the prosecution had an ironclad case

and advised him to plead “no contest”.

Trusting Mourik’s advice, Sixx did so and was returned to jail - for another three months - to

await sentencing. In early November he was sentenced to pay a fine, six months' probation, and

2 years’ community control (a form of house arrest, which would restrict him to Florida). Since

the bookstore owner had testified that the robbery had occurred in order to support drug habits,

Sixx said, he was also ordered to attend a drug rehabilitation program.

What he did not yet know was that the establishment in question turned out to incorporate

intensive Christian-fundamentalist religious programming as well. The community control and

drug-rehabilitation sentence seemed odd to Sixx, who did not have a drug habit [nor, as a

successful rock musician with a sizable income, would he need to rob a bookstore in order to

support one]. And that wasn't the trial's only surprise, as he wrote to me:

This is weird. The dude who **planned** it was found "Not Guilty". He's the one who **robbed**

the man. Jeff was in the car and got 3-1/2 years. I was blamed as the mastermind and I got 2-6

months. Strange as hell!

But anything, even a drug program, seemed better than the Collier County Jail, so Sixx

reported to the "New Life Center" of Fern House, Inc. in West Palm Beach. His initial joy at

being out of jail ["Beds - real beds! - TV, couches, pop & candy machines!"] soon changed to

apprehension when he began to realize what he had walked into. "It's a church of God, and they

preach that you should accept God in your Will. Screw them! All you really need is faith in

yourself. They're the types that want one to ask for forgiveness and to be 'Born Again'. These

people are brainwashed. Rules here are strict: No playing rock music or wearing T-shirts that

invoke the Devil." And:

They cut my hair! And I mean it is **short**. They cut all the black off and left me with only

short brown hair, and then denied me the right to dye it, saying: “It is the work of the Devil.”

A short haircut could perhaps be survived, if not enjoyed - but other, more ominous

developments began to be communicated by Sixx via phone calls during the following weeks: He

was forbidden to communicate with friends from his “former life”. He was forbidden to go into a

music store. Mail addressed to him was intercepted, confiscated, and/ or destroyed. Even his

guitar was confiscated. Verbal abuse and intimidation by the staff became a daily routine. Even

his telephone calls to me were cut short abruptly by the staff after one or two minutes. It seemed

that a systematic effort was underway, first to cut off all of Sixx’ contact with anyone who had

known him as the insidious heavy metal Satanist, and then to work on him psychologically until

he had completely lost his identity and could be reprogramed into a good little Born-Again

Christian.

Increasingly concerned over Sixx’ plight, I asked Tom Traxinger, the Court Counselor who

had assigned Sixx to Fern House, to investigate. He did so - with the result that, after his query

had been fielded, Sixx called to say that he had been promptly hauled before one of the program

directors, told that he would now be **permanently** restricted to the

premises, that his phone

calls would henceforth be restricted as well, and that the slightest infraction would result in his

immediate return to jail. He was told that the the Temple of Set is “a sick, crazed cult” with

which he should have nothing more to do.

At this news I wrote to the head of Fern House, promising public exposure of the treatment

Sixx was receiving unless his human and civil rights were immediately and meticulously

respected. The result was (a) a phone call from the program director saying that he “didn’t take

lightly to threats”, and (b) Nikki Sixx being dumped at the West Palm Beach bus station at 8 PM

with $2 in his pocket and a warning that he had until 1 PM the following day to report to his

probation officer - 200 miles away in Naples!

Sixx called Temple of Set Priest Roger Whitaker from the bus station, and Whitaker offered

to wire him funds for transportation. Sixx, however, was able to obtain emergency travel funds

from Mötley Crüe’s Tommy Lee and complete the journey in time.

Lodged with friends in Naples, Sixx thought his troubles at an end. He began to speak about

forming a new band, of returning to his musical career.

It seems that the vested interests behind Mötley Crüe thought otherwise. With the original

Nikki Sixx safely out of circulation in jail or a religious-deprogramming/ drug-rehabilitation

program, the replacement Sixx could continue to perform with the

band until fans had grown

completely accustomed to him. But the house of cards was beginning to tremble. Sixx' ex-

manager told him that Elektra was beginning to receive mail and phone calls from confused fans

voicing suspicion about Ferraro. Sixx added that he was called by Doc McGhee, who said that if

he continued to assert his identity, the company would prosecute him for fraud and see that he

was returned to jail.

Then Sixx' ex-manager called the family with whom he was staying, warning them that he

was schizophrenic and quite possibly a physical danger to them. She phoned Priest Whitaker,

first saying that she was just a housewife who had never worked as Sixx' manager, then relaying

the same warnings about prosecution of Sixx should he refuse to cooperate in the Ferraro

substitution. Priest Whitaker recommended an attorney to aid Sixx in a legal claim for his name,

musical accomplishments, and royalties. Sixx responded that Gene Simmons of KISS had

advised him against confronting Elektra until he had first made his plight known to his many

fans and rallied popular support behind him.

So the Man in the Iron Mask remains today in Naples, Florida on probation and under

"community control", while the current "Nikki Sixx" works on a fourth album with the other

three members of Mötley Crüe. Through the kind interest of Paul Kantner, he has been referred

to a skilled attorney specializing in the music business, who hopefully will see fit to take his case.

What exactly is going on here? Part of the answer comes from Adept Demon O'Brien, who

reports from contacts in the music business that, due to the Neil disaster and the whopping $2

million fine it entailed, Mötley Crüe is in dire financial straits. One speculates that corporate

interests advanced this sum on condition that the group adhere to puritan standards of personal

behavior henceforth, the idea being that the Crüe was still a good bet as a moneymaker but that

any more adverse publicity could destroy it permanently.

If it were ever contemplated in 1984 that Sixx' armed-robbery charge could be survived, that

option probably went out the window at the end of the year when the Neil accident occurred.

It **does** seem peculiar that Sixx, who just drove the robber to his destination, not knowing

that a robbery would occur, would be advised to plead "no contest" to an armed robbery felony

charge and be found guilty - while the actual perpetrator was found "not guilty". It also seems

peculiar that the executives behind Mötley Crüe would not have provided Sixx with privately-

retained legal counsel to fight for his innocence.

Then there is the nature of Sixx' sentence, which appears tailor-made to keep him (a) stuck in

Florida and (b) out of circulation in "community control" (house arrest) preceded by a "religious

deprogramming" operation which, if it had been allowed to control Sixx totally without external

attention, might have succeeded in destroying or seriously damaging his unique artistic and

Satanic personality.

If Sixx had received his just due "behind the scenes", with Elektra sending him regular

royalties for his musical work, it could at least be assumed that the best was being made of a

situation which, if known publicly, might have resulted in the total ruin of the band. However the

attempt to "erase" Sixx seems to have extended into monetary matters as well. Sixx states that he

has seen no money from Warner's/Elektra at all since the beginning of 1985, and that checks

from them in late 1984 were in the form of intermittent "pocket money" payments. On calling

Elektra in New York in mid-85, he was told to "be patient", and later that his earnings were being

placed in an "escrow account". He says that Mick Mars alerted him to the odd fact that the

Florida state envelope containing the letter about this escrow account was actually postmarked

in **Los Angeles**.

So it looks as though a deliberate decision were made to disconnect Matthew Trippe from his

identity as Nikki Sixx, both publicly and - insofar as possible - psychologically. It is not known

exactly who made such a decision. Whether or not the other three original members of Mötley

Crüe anticipated the ordeal Sixx would endure as a consequence, the

longer the Ferraro

replacement persisted, the more they were trapped into continuing with it. Even Ferraro himself,

whether or not he believed the replacement a temporary stand-in, is now stuck in the stage

persona - which, in the long run, will probably prove as unfortunate for him as for Sixx - since,

no matter how talented he may be, he is replacing another. Mars and Lee, at least, seem to have

enough concern and affection for their old friend that they have stayed in occasional touch with

him and on at least one occasion helped him with funds.

To merely expose the situation before the public eye might do damage that would help no

one. Any corporate backers would promptly write off Mötley Crüe as a loss. Mars, Lee, and Neil

would be disgraced for appearing to have cooperated in the abandonment and suppression of

their old comrade. Ferraro would appear to have exploited Sixx' misfortunes and have deceived

Sixx fans. And the real Nikki Sixx, after receiving an initial burst of publicity and sympathy,

would remain saddled with a felony conviction and denied any royalties deserved from

Warner's/Elektra.

A better solution might be for an out-of-court, private settlement to secure for Sixx the past/

present/future royalties he deserves, as well as the right to publicly assert the name Nikki Sixx as

soon as the probation/community control is lifted. Alexandre Dumas' story suggests a magically-

appropriate end to the whole story, wherein - by advance agreement - Ferraro slips quietly out of

the Nikki Sixx role and the real one just as quietly slips back into it!

A move should also be made to throw out the felony conviction, if in fact Sixx were not a

knowing participant in the robbery and did nothing more than drive the perpetrators to the

scene, then flee it in panic. He could presumably be criticized for poor taste in choosing friends,

and penalized for fleeing the scene of a crime with the perpetrator - but that is a far cry from a

felony conviction for armed robbery on his record, which will haunt and cripple him throughout

his life.

Like Milton's Satan, Nikki Sixx attained great heights only to fall to the lowest depths. The

issue is now whether, also like Satan, he will be able to rise again to a greater dignity than before:

a dignity born of the ordeals he has undergone and survived - loss of fame, wealth, freedom, the

near-loss of his very personality and name. If teenaged fans once cheered him as a symbol of

adolescent *Sturm und Drang*, people of all ages may now cheer him as one of those very

uncommon, very noble individuals who would risk all, endure all - rather than refuse to Be.

* * * * *

Shortly after the first contact from this mysterious individual, I asked Temple of Set Adept

Demon O'Brien, a music industry professional and close personal friend of KISS' Gene Simmons,

if she could verify his story. O'Brien telephoned me on January 4, 1986 to say that she had just

met with Simmons in Knoxville, Tennessee, where KISS was doing a concert, and that he had

confirmed to her that Matthew Trippe was indeed the original Nikki Sixx - but that, since KISS

was also signed with Elektra, he would not say anything publicly about it. With this confirmation

[and the traffic ticket], I decided to run the *Runes* story.

Subsequently both the American *Rolling Stone* (June 1988) and the British *Kerrang!* (March

1988) and *New Musical Express* (January 1988) ran major stories on

the Sixx/Trippe

controversy. A lawsuit initiated by Trippe was dismissed for not falling within the statute of

limitations. Warner's/Elektra and the four current members of Mötley Crüe have steadfastly

maintained that there is no truth whatever to Trippe's account of events. He himself, in Internet

interviews, continues to assert it to this day.

The Nine Unknown

- by -

Nikki Sixx II°

May XXII ÆS

In the Eye of Set

There lurks a mysterious,

Invisible Force:

The Council of Nine.

They gather and frown

At the Christians' cross

In mourning for man

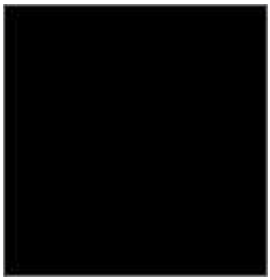
And for his mind's loss.

Then, in a final flash of glory,

Set

Shalt thou come

To grace the night.



14: The Abased Eighties II:

A Tree in the North

The threat of your destruction grows as a tree in the north; its branches reach to cover

the Earth with misery and despair; it consumes being night and day; it slays as the

scorpion; it poisons the very air with its stench. This is the doom whose triumph would

destroy you as would the rupture of the Earth itself. Then this one growth would nourish

thousands, even as a foulness of heart perverts the mind. And then woe, woe, woe, woe,

woe, woe, yes, woe to the Earth, for its foulness will be great. Heed well the warning of this

Word.

- Tenth Part of the *Word of Set*

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s it was fun to be first a Satanist and later a Setian in

America.

As recounted in my *Church of Satan* history, Satanists were generally regarded as the most

colorful, exciting, and amusing extreme of what was popularly called the “Occult Revival”

movement. Both Anton LaVey’s original Central Grotto in San Francisco and the various local

Grottos that sprang up around the country became something akin to fashion statements in their

locales. They were exciting to join or visit; their rituals and ceremonies could be counted upon to

be spooky, spectacular, scary, and slapstick. A local Satanist, or better yet Priest or Priestess of

the Church, was a guaranteed draw for any kind of lecture, seminar, media talk show, or

Halloween party.

Even conventional churches, which one would think would be horrified at such a sinister

competitor in their midst, often found themselves enjoying the novelty in spite of themselves.

After all, it gave them something tangible to righteously denounce. It got them into show biz too,

because local television and radio stations quickly figured out that the best debate opponent for a

professional Satanist was a professional Christian.

And Hollywood happily fanned the flames. From *Rosemary’s Baby* in 1966 to *The Exorcist* in

1974, showdowns between the Devil and God were big box-office.

When the Temple of Set was founded in 1975, indeed, those of us who had resigned from the

Church of Satan to create this new institution felt that it was time to calm down a little. The

Church had remained such a darling of the media that Satanists found their time taken up

largely by public relations events. There just wasn't time for serious Black Magic, which, after all,

was what becoming a Satanist was supposed to be all about.

Furthermore the Temple of Set was finally facing head-on what its predecessor had been tap-

dancing around for the previous decade: that there was a serious, sophisticated, and potentially

very illuminating foundation for this "religion of otherness". In this the Temple also benefitted

from divesting itself completely of Judæo-Christian mythology, ideology, and symbolism. We

harked back instead to pre-J/C ancient Egypt, and an interpretation of its metaphysics that

promised to open a door to the divinity of each initiated individual.

And so it was for the Temple's first decade as well - with one difference: that we determined

from the outSet that our attention would always be devoted to our own membership's benefit.

We were not there to entertain, fascinate, or stimulate the public any more. So modest and

private was the Temple of Set, indeed, that the outside world scarcely knew we were there at all.

That was just fine with Setians as we settled down to explore the great mysteries of philosophy,

magic, and metaphysics.

And we expected it would continue pleasantly on that way forever. None of us, myself

included, ever anticipated the nightmare that awaited not just Satanists/Setians, but indeed the

entire “occult subculture” - and many who weren’t actually part of it at all - in the 1980s.

It began in 1977 when a man named Lawrence Pazder published a book entitled *Michelle*

Remembers. In this book he alleged that his wife Michelle had as an infant been kidnapped and

sexually abused by Satanists, then had “repressed” all memories of the experience until he

elicited them from her as an adult through “therapy sessions”.

I remember that when we first heard of it, we all laughed it off as ludicrous, and certainly too

transparently so for anyone to take seriously. It was soon to be found on “remaindered” sale

tables, from one of which I picked up my own copy.

But away from our amused and contemptuous dismissal, it happened that many other eyes

were reading the book and taking it very seriously indeed. Or, more malevolently, seeing in it a

new technique for acquiring power, fame, and money by imitating its theme.

Michelle Remembers was ultimately exposed as a fraud, but by then its damage had been

done, and that damage proved to be horrific and incalculable, destroying lives, families, and

societies throughout many countries.

The ominous consequences of *Michelle Remembers* first came to widespread public attention

in 1983, when a mentally-ill woman named Judy Johnson, on the sole "evidence" of her son's

irritated anus, made an accusation of "Satanic child-molestation" against the McMartin

Preschool in Los Angeles. Although the child's doctor and father saw nothing unusual about the

irritation, and although Johnson was later diagnosed as an acute paranoid schizophreniac, the

damage was done and the McMartin witch-hunt was ignited. It was to end in court seven years

later with no finding of any abuse by anyone at the day-care center.

The nationwide drama and sensationalism associated with *Michelle Remembers* and the

McMartin case ignited an epidemic of "day-care Satanic sex abuse" witch-hunts across the

United States. While many persons were prosecuted and convicted of sex-abuse as a

consequence, not one instance of "Satanism" in connection with either child abuse or day-care

center activity was ever demonstrated.

The Department of Defense community was not immune from the epidemic. By November

1987 there had been 15 child-sex-abuse accusation scares at Army day-care centers and

elementary schools alone. In late 1986 it was the turn of the Presidio of San Francisco.

On 9/28/86 the *San Francisco Examiner* began a series of 8 front-page stories

sensationalizing the witch-hunts. Approximately a month later one set of Presidio parents

claimed that their son might have been anally raped by one of the day-care teachers, Gary

Hambright, and the scare was off and running, with scores of children being “abuse-diagnosed”

by a “play-therapist” despite not a single published confirmation of actual physical harm to any

child. Hambright denied any “abusing” whatever, and all of the other teachers and staff

supported him.

As in other witch-hunts it made no difference: Over the next year Hambright was suspended,

indicted, charges dropped, reindicted, charges redropped amidst a massive media frenzy.

Parents rushed to file over $74 million in claims, as was also routine in such witch-hunts. [The

previous year a similar, highly-publicized witch-hunt at West Point had resulted in $110 million

claims.]

Left out of the Presidio claims bonanza were Christian chaplain Larry Adams-Thompson and

his wife Michele, who had never reported their daughter Kinsey Almond for any physical or

psychological symptoms during the entire time she had been under Hambright’s supervision at

the day-care center (9/1-10/31/86). In their original 1/87 FBI interviews both A-Ts were specific

about that date- window, because Almond turned 3 on 9/1/86 and, as confirmed by the Presidio

Director of Personnel & Community Affairs, Hambright supervised only children age 3 and

older.

Despite Almond's untouched state [on 3/12/87 Presidio doctors examined her and

pronounced her a virgin free from any physical signs of abuse], the A-Ts placed her in an

intensive 8-month program of "play-therapy". The same "therapist" who pronounced the scores

of other children "abused" soon pronounced Almond "abused" as well.

The A-Ts, however, were not content with just accusing Hambright. In 6/87 Michele

introduced "SRA" themes and insinuations about me - who had been a topic of curiosity and

gossip as a famous "Satanist" officer throughout my 1981-86 assignment to the Presidio

Headquarters - to the "therapist". Then on 8/13/87 the A-Ts saw my wife Lilith and myself at the

Presidio post exchange and went running to the witch-hunt investigators alleging that Almond

had accused us of kidnapping and raping her while she was under Hambright's supervision.

[They then climbed on board the financial bandwagon with a $3 million claim of their own based

on their faked story.] This quickly resulted in an even more sensationalistic international media

storm.

The San Francisco Police investigated, verified that Lilith and I had been 3,000 miles away in

Washington, D.C. - where I was on duty every single day Almond was at the daycare center

9/1-10/31/86 - and closed the case with no charges accordingly.

In October 1988, however, I appeared as a panelist on a Geraldo Rivera Halloween special.

Rivera was trying to sensationalize and encourage the “SRA” witchhunt mania, and I was

speaking out against it. The broadcast came to the attention of Senator Jesse Helms, who

became enraged that a Lt. Colonel in the Army should dare to hold a “Satanic” religion. As

Freedom of Information Act filings later revealed, Helms then secretly contacted his close

personal friend, Secretary of the Army John Marsh, and insisted that Marsh devise some way to

destroy my career.

As my 20-year military record was without blemish [In 1987 I was the sole U.S. Army Reserve

officer in the nation selected to attend the prestigious National Defense University/Industrial

College of the Armed Forces], the only way to act on Helms’ demand was to try to revive the

chaplain’s scheme to threaten Lilith and myself, apparently expecting that with sufficient

intimidation by the Army Criminal Investigation Division (CID) I would resign and “disappear”.

[It didn't work.]

The CID first (1/89) illegally forced a fulltime active duty board to deny me a new fulltime

contract on expiration of my current one in 9/90. Six months later, after a sham

“reinvestigation”, it issued a report “titling” Lilith and myself for the chaplain’s allegations.

[“Titling” is a statement by the CID that it thinks a crime occurred.] Nevertheless the report itself

contained not a single item of “evidence” other than the A-Ts’ allegations that any crime

whatever had occurred - and either suppressed or ignored abundant evidence of our innocence

and the A-Ts’ violations.

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[For example, the CID tried to get around our 3,000-miles-away proof of innocence by

finding out when we **had** previously been in San Francisco - several months before the 9-10/86

“window” - and then (in 1989) simply revising the allegation to **that** date! When the CID then

learned that that this manufactured redate made the A-Ts’ alleged location physically

impossible, it then (in 1991) proceeded to invent a **new** location, once again on no grounds

except its 1991 predicament. Both the manufactured “redating” and “relocating” necessarily

made numerous additional elements of the chaplain’s original fabrication impossible as well -

inconvenient complications that the CID addressed by simply ignoring them.]

What this bizarre exercise in “manufactured evidence” **did** demonstrate was the strength of

the political agenda predetermining the CID’s “reinvestigation” from the outset. [For instance,

the CID’s illegal fixing of the fulltime-duty board took place at the **beginning** of its

“reinvestigation” - half a year before it was supposedly able to

perform the evaluation of that

investigation.] Clearly an exposé that we had in fact been the innocent victims of a cold-blooded,

calculated scheme to defraud the government - by a **Christian chaplain** - was politically out of

the question from the beginning.

My repeated demands that those responsible for the CID action, as well as the chaplain, be

court-martialed for false official statements, manufacture of evidence, obstruction of justice,

misprision of serious offense, attempted $3 million defrauding of the government, and several

other UCMJ and federal law violations, were similarly - and equally illegally - suppressed. The

CID's response was to say that I was "swearing falsely" to these facts. Nevertheless it could not -

and did not - produce even a single example of **any** such "factual falsehood" in the documents I

filed and swore to under penalty of perjury. [Nor, of course, was I ever charged with making even

a single "false statement".]

No charges at all resulted from the CID report. Not so much as even a letter of reprimand.

The Army had known from the outset that the chaplain's allegations were fraudulent, of course.

By administrative complaint process in 1990 we were able to have the "SRA titling" of Lilith

removed. The CID refused to remove mine - although the A-Ts had always alleged we "did the

SRA together" - because to do so would have exploded the entire CID operation and opened a

trail of serious law violations leading to Helms and Secretary of the Army Marsh.

I next filed suit in federal court in 1990 to have the rest of the CID report exposed and

retracted. The U.S. Privacy Act would have forced a comparison of every CID statement in the

report with the actual facts (a *de novo* judicial review). For this reason the CID argued intensely

that its reports should be **immune** from *de novo* review.

The case was filed as a Motion for Summary Judgment. There was no jury or in-court

testimony. We assumed that the CID's legal violations were so flagrant, obvious, and numerous

that a simple ruling by the judge would suffice.

To our surprise the judge ruled that all CID reports were indeed exempt from *de novo* judicial

review, and that the CID could conclude whatever it wished from its report **as written**.

We appealed, and the appeals court upheld the district judge's decision to exempt CID

reports from the Privacy Act. Again in its decision, the appeals court recited as "facts" excerpts

from the very CID document whose falsehoods were the **issue** of the entire lawsuit.

Following the lawsuit I detailed and documented the CID lawyer's extensive lies in briefs &

oral argument to the Army Inspector General, Judge Advocate General, and finally the Army

Chief of Staff.

None of my facts or documents was disputed or refuted, but neither was any action taken to

court-martial those responsible. This effectively exhausted my options.

The bottom line was that on one hand the politically-driven “black bag job” to intimidate me

out of the Army had failed, and indeed could not withstand many other decent and honorable

offices and officials in the same Army who, as they learned about the scheme, refused to aid,

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING: THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AUTHORIZED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER, 16 JANUARY 1969 HAS AWARDED

THE MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL

TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL MICHAEL A. AQUINO MILITARY INTELLIGENCE UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE

FOR Outstanding meritorious service over a long and distinguished military career as a Citizen Soldier of the United States Army Reserve whose service was characterized by selfless dedication and great personal commitment from 22 March 1984 through 21 March 1994. This dedicated service, marked with significant contributions, has greatly improved the effectiveness of the United States Army.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON THIS 8th DAY OF September 19 94

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

DA FORM 4980-12, APR 81

abet, or tolerate it. [This included every single superior officer in my own chain of command

throughout all the years of the initial attack against us and the subsequent investigations.]

On the other hand we came to realize that it was politically out of the question that a

Christian chaplain be court-martialed for crimes committed against a “Satanist” and his wife, or

that trails of illegal actions leading to powerful national political figures would be followed. And

we also learned that the courts were also not about to force exposure such a widespread and

potentially politically-explosive cover-up as this one.

On the expiration of my fulltime active duty contract in 1990, I continued as a part-time

active USAR officer for the next four years, assigned to Headquarters US Space Command with

an above-Top Secret clearance. I decided to retire from the Active Reserve in 1994, and at that

time received the Meritorious Service Medal from the [new] Secretary of the Army, covering

1984-1994. I remain today in the Army as a Lt. Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired).

Most people will find it sufficient, I think, that Lilith and I were never charged with anything

after two long investigations (SFPD/FBI, CID), that I retained my TS+ clearance, and that I

retired honorably in 1994. All of my Officer Efficiency Reports from the time of the attack on us

to my 1994 retirement also continued to give me the highest possible evaluations in all

categories.

My military service and present Army-Retired status are public record and can be

independently verified by anyone wishing to take the trouble.

Nor is the 1990 lawsuit in any sense a “skeleton in my closet”. A review of my attorney’s

district & appeals briefs & orals will glaringly expose what was actually taking place: a court

coverup of blatant Senatorial/SecArmy/CID misconduct - and simultaneous brushing-aside of

numerous illegal actions against an Army officer and his wife of a “politically incorrect” religion.

By the end of the 1980s the “SRA” urban myth had been exhausted: It had become

conspicuously obvious to all but the most irrational fanatics that not a single one of the staged

witch-hunts had actually produced any Satanists or Satanic cults. Also, law-enforcement and

child-protective authorities, which had been caught off-guard by the decade of hysteria, had by

now completed their own methodical studies. The consensus was that "SRA":

• - does **not** exist in the United States, as reported by the FBI's National Center for the

Analysis of Violent Crime in 1992, after an 11-year study. "There are many children in the

United States who, starting early in their lives, are severely psychologically, physically,

and sexually traumatized by angry, sadistic parents or other adults. Such abuse, however,

is not perpetrated only or primarily by satanists. The statistical odds are that such abusers

are members of mainstream religions ... For the last eight years American law

enforcement has been aggressively investigating the allegations of victims of ritual abuse.

There is little or no evidence for the portion of their allegations that deals with large-scale

baby-breeding, human sacrifice, and organized satanic conspiracies." (*Investigator's*

Guide to Allegations of "Ritual" Child Abuse, January 1992)

• - does **not** exist in the United States, as concluded by an exhaustive national study for the

National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect: "In a survey of more than 11,000 psychiatric

and police workers throughout the country, conducted for the National Center on Child

Abuse and Neglect, researchers found more than 12,000 accusations of group cult sexual

abuse based on Satanic ritual, but **not one** that investigators had been able to

substantiate. 'After scouring the country, we found **no** evidence for large-scale cults that

sexually abuse children,' said Dr. Gail Goodman, a psychologist at the University of

California at Davis, who directed the survey. The survey included 6,910 psychiatrists,

psychologists, and clinical social workers; and 4,655 district attorneys, police

departments, and social service agencies. They reported 12,264 accusations of ritual abuse

that they had investigated. The survey found that there was **not a single** case among

them where there was clear corroborating evidence for the most common accusation, that

there was "a well-organized, intergenerational Satanic cult who sexually molested and

tortured children in their homes or schools for years and committed a series of murders,"

said Goodman. (Daniel Goleman, *New York Times*, reprinted *San Francisco Chronicle*

11/1/94)

• - does **not** exist in the United Kingdom, as reported by the British Government's

Department of Health in 1994, after a three-year investigation. "There is no evidence that

these ["Satanic ritual abuse"] have taken place in any of the 84 cases studied ... The study

of cases in detail showed that the Evangelical Christian campaign against new religious

movements has been a powerful influence encouraging the identification of satanic abuse.

Equally important in spreading the idea of satanic abuse in Britain are the professional

'specialists', American and British. Their claims or qualifications are rarely checked. Much

of their information, particularly about cases in the United States, is unreliable." (*The*

Extent and Nature of Organised and Ritual Abuse, HMSO, 1994)

And so it was finally over for Setians, Satanists, Wiccans, neopagans, and similar targets of

one of the most sustained, horrific, and vicious witch-hunts since the Middle Ages.

But it was not over for many of the proponents and profiteers. What they realized was that

there was still publicity to be milked, and massive amounts of money to be made through claims

and lawsuits - only now from targets much more accessible and vulnerable than nonexistent

"Satanic cults". Now accusations and "recovered memories" were directed against parents and

close family relatives, whose proximity and opportunity were undeniable and indefensible. A

short time later the international Catholic Church, whose priests have extensive educational

contact with parishioners' children, became an even more popular and lucrative target - the

more so since, unlike the "SRA" myth, this church was indeed found

to have a major child sexual

abuse problem.

From the time of its founding in 1975, the Temple of Set had determined that one of the

features of the Church of Satan it would **not** emulate was that institution's courting of publicity.

While somewhat entertaining, as well as being free advertisement for new Satanists, the constant

public appearances by both Anton LaVey and the national Priesthood had not only sapped the

time and energy of both, but had seduced all of us into more "media whoredom" than we cared

to admit. Indeed it was in part the Church of Satan's struggle to live up to its absurdly-inflated

"legend" that precipitated Anton's effort to dismantle the actual organization in 1974 in favor of

an invisible, untraceable "Movement" whose image he could spin without fear of contradiction

by reality.

The Temple of Set couldn't care less about publicity; in fact it actively sought to avoid it. We

were building an initiatory environment and "toolbox" for Setians, not for nonSetians'

entertainment or diversion. If that meant we grew only by word-of-mouth, and that with

painstaking deliberation, so much the better.

This policy served the Temple just fine - until the completely-unexpected anti-Satanic

witchhunts of the later-1980s. Suddenly the almost complete mystery of the Temple of Set made

it the world's most-feared suspect institution, displacing yesterday's hats such as the Trilateral

Commission, the Illuminati, and the Freemasons.

Much to my annoyance, therefore - and also in obvious response to the "SRA" attack on Lilith

and myself - I began accepting speaking engagements as well as radio and television interviews.

Over the next several years I explained and re-explained the Temple of Set, Setian philosophy,

and "why we had nothing to do with stereotypical anti-Judæo/ Christian Devil-worship" to Oprah

Winfrey, Geraldo Rivera, and a seemingly-endless host of their fellow journalists. Other Temple

officials, among them Stephen Flowers, Robert Menschel, and Patty Hardy, also accepted similar

engagements. Not lost on me was the considerable personal risk they took by appearing before

fearful, often hostile audiences.

There were a few moments of incidental slapstick. On one occasion Stephen Flowers and I

were invited down to Killeen, Texas to appear on a "Satanic crime" panel at a multistate law-

enforcement convention. To illustrate the difference between "Hollywood Satanism" and what I

intended to describe as the real thing, I began [against both Stephen's and Lilith's advice] with a

film clip from *The Devil's Rain* in which Ernest Borgnine, after transforming into a hideous goat-

demon, magically burns the eyes out of William Shatner [who, fortunately, got them back in time

for the Star Trek movie revival the next year]. When I switched off the

projector and turned the

lights on, I was dumbfounded to see an auditoriumful of starkly-horrified policemen, sheriffs,

and even the Texas Rangers!

Later during that panel discussion, Pat Pulling, president of “Mothers Against Dungeons &

Dragons” (another obvious Satanic conspiracy to destroy the minds of America’s youth) was

asked if she considered me a “good Satanist”. She responded, “I’m sure he’s a good man. I can’t

bring myself to use the words ‘good’ and ‘Satanist’ in the same sentence.”

Stephen and I left Killeen the next day after being presented with Honorary badges in its

Police Department.

As the “SRA” urban myth fizzled out in the 1990s, so did the need for such appearances - and

of course by now the Temple of Set was no longer a mystery to anyone, though arguably still

somewhat incomprehensible. During one commercial break on his show, Geraldo Rivera asked

me if I would please stick to words of no more than two syllables so as not to lost the television

audience.

Upon resuming the High Priesthood after the departure of Ronald Barrett, my original

intention was just to rebuild and update the Temple, then pass it again to the next generation of

Setians. The dangers of the 1980s changed all that. I felt myself far

better to cope with them on

behalf of the Temple than anyone else, so I determined to stay on post until I was satisfied that

the danger was past. By the mid-1990s this was safely evident.

Looking back on that experience, I am reminded of a poem of my mother, [later Setian

Priestess] Betty Ford, composed at age 13:

Forced Entrance

There came a time when they were not content

To shriek against the portals and the shrine.

They crushed the silver gates, and in they went,

Hot-handed, on a search for the Divine.

And the white portals opened ceaselessly,

And the great purple curtains flapped and fell,

And the great mass of people swept to see

Naked Untruth, but how they could not tell.

Still they found nothing godlike, but a throne

Empty and time-worn, in an empty hall,

And a white heap of manuscripts, alone,

And the Sun's rays that fell, nor ceased to fall.

And, in one sheltered crevasse they went by,

A flight of stairs that wound into the sky.

15: A Passing-By

The abasements of the 1980s notwithstanding, the history of the Temple of Set from my

resumption of the High Priesthood in 1981 to my retirement from it in 1996 was a period of

unmarred pleasure and pleasantness for the Temple of Set. There were occasional differences of

opinion among Setians given our widely-cast net of interests; unsurprisingly none of these

deterred or disrupted the primary goals of expansion of the Order/ Pylon/Element system and

the development of the Temple's publications and access to them.

When I first conceived this memoir, it was my intention to include

names and commentaries

concerning every significant Setian magician and philosopher who raised the Temple to its

present plateau of excellence. I soon realized that, particularly in the post-1981 window, this

would be an impossibility; there are just too many of them, and their influence cannot possibly

be summarized in a few paragraphs. So I will defer that task to the Temple's other historical

archives, particularly the Scroll of Set and the several Order, Element, and Pylon publications.

My goal in this Temple of Set thus became far more modest: to recount the early, formative

stages of the Temple's construction, and to summarize what might be called "Setian philosophy"

in its most simplified form. The former (Part I) thus concludes with this chapter, while the latter

commences immediately following it (Part II).

In the June 1996 *Scroll of Set* I finally laid aside my High Priesthood thus:

Sexem-fs em utu arit er-a tep ta. "He has gained the mastery of what was set forth to

be done for me upon Earth." - Stele of Set, X ÆS

The *Heb-Sed* Festival of XXX/1995 resulted in many memorable works and events, and each of

us who passed through it emerged enriched and fulfilled by its aurora.

In my own case it brought about extensive meditation on my own role within and

responsibilities to the Temple, as I have Understood them to be since the North Solstice Working

of X/1975. I have come to the conclusion that the sacred charge given to me as High Priest of Set

has now been fulfilled, and that upon the North Solstice of this year I am therefore called to retire

from this office.

Subsequently I will continue to handle routine administrative tasks of the office in a transition

capacity until a successor has been confirmed by the Council of Nine. I will of course work

cooperatively with that successor and with the Executive Director to ensure that the transition of

all Temple operations is as efficient and seamless as possible. I suggest the forthcoming Set-XVII

International Conclave this November as an opportune occasion for ceremonial observance of the

new High Priesthood.

Henceforth I will accept no offices in the Temple, but will of course remain active and

contributive as an individual Initiate. I desire, for instance, to continue and expand my historical

and archival work, as in the recent *Scroll* project, to make more and more of the treasures of the

past two decades of the Æon easily and coherently available to the Setians of today and tomorrow,

through both Glinda and other media as opportune and appropriate.

At the time of the founding of the Temple, I Understood the High Priesthood to be not a

lifetime station for the individual so entrusted, but rather a reflection of whichever Initiate within

the Priesthood appeared most singularly to be the High Priest or Priestess of Set at a given point in

time. Such a person would possess and display a unique intimacy with Set, and from this would

radiate a passionate guardianship over the Priesthood consecrated to him, and more generally

over the Temple dedicated in his name.

It is thus no single criterion, but a mix of them which characterizes the High Priesthood.

Perhaps most pointedly, it is by no means simply a measure of sincerity, integrity, or personal

dedication to one's Priesthood. Were this the case, all true Priests and Priestesses could assuredly

add the "High"-prefix. Nor is it primarily a measure of seniority, wisdom, experience, and

initiatory Understanding, else every Master of the Temple would certainly be so called.

The *Heb-Sed* gave me the opportunity not only to consider my own High Priesthood, but to

reflect upon all of the Masters as possible successors. I have done so and shared my thoughts with

the Masters of the Temple, whose discussions and deliberations will similarly flow into the Council

of Nine during its formal nomination and confirmation process.

I have now been an Initiate of the Priesthood for 26 years and High Priest for a Working period

of 18 years [as Magus Ronald K. Barrett held the office for the 3 years mid-79 to mid-82]. It has

been an exhilarating, inspiring, and above all soul-transforming experience. I believe I have done

my very best to do "what was set forth to be done", and I am so very

proud of the Temple and so

very appreciative of the opportunity to work with and learn from all the Setians over the years,

senior and junior, old friends and new ones alike. The Temple of Set is a magical mirror of all the

Initiates who have passed through its pylons, and what a majestic, delightful, and **authentic**

reflection that is!

From the moment of its [re]creation in 1975, we have instinctively felt the Temple of Set to be

something unprecedented on this world. It crystallized a premise at once more ambitious and

more subtle than that of its Church of Satan prelude. And unlike the cynical pessimism of the

Church, the Temple has always had about it a wondrous exuberance, an electrifying optimism, a

promise of wonders and marvels to be enjoyed by all who ventured through its pylons. We may

not have anticipated all of these discoveries accurately on our first exposure to them - and on

occasion some Initiates have found the light too intense for their self-possession - but such

growing pains as we have experienced have never eclipsed the magic and magnificence of the

Æonic current. And no one who has experienced initiation as catalyzed by the Temple, whether

temporarily or over an enduring period, has been unaffected by it.

No initiatory system exists in a vacuum. The great temples and orders of history all were

enhancements of, or reactions to social currents and critical events in their time. The Temple of

Set has similarly remanifested amidst the dramatic and stormy fluctuations of Western civilization

from the 1970s to the 1990s: “the best of times, the worst of times”. Never before in recorded

history have so many social absolutes disintegrated into relatives, while at the same time

technology has exploded into uncontrollable and addictive extremes. Never before has the

individual been able to gather information so quickly, communicate so efficiently, travel so easily.

Yet paradoxically humans have never felt so anonymous, powerless, and alienated: infinitesimal

cogs in a giant *Metropolis* machine of history careening onward out of control.

In and by the Temple of Set we have asserted something in each initiated human which is

immortal, ineffably noble, and blissfully sublime. We have worked with it, played with it, dreamed

about it, and found in it something which we could indeed worship with unashamed reverence -

when all around us the remnants of the world’s conventional religions are so desiccated as to

hardly be worth even the shadow of contempt.

Ultimately, then, what the Temple of Set has done has been to restore to us an awareness of

the great dignity of individual consciousness. Once we are awakened to this, all else that we do

flows from it as remanifestations of the respective *neteru*.

This too is why the real Temple of Set can never be perverted, corrupted, or destroyed. The

institution we have built over the years to symbolize, facilitate, and

operate the Temple was and

remains a tool of convenience, a means of bridging the realms of magic and *nœsis* to those of

science and *dianoia*. The better we refine the bridge, the more efficient we make the tool, the more

fluent we become in this adventure and the easier it is to teach its techniques to others. But

destroy the bridge and you have still not in the least damaged the Gift of Set itself.

In Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy the First Foundation proved invincible because its

existence was mandated by a principle larger than itself - in that case hypothetical metacycles of

civilization called "psychohistory". The Temple and Æon of Set are similarly mandated by the

transcendent principle of what Eric Hoffer called "the unnaturalness of human nature", as well as

by the capacity and drive of this "unnature" to evolve towards divinity: *Xeper*.

While the Judæo/Christian tradition has demonized and tried to pervert or exterminate this

quality, greater philosophies and philosophers have sought it, romanticized it, exalted it. It is

Nietzsche's "horizon building", the Taoists' "secret of the Golden Flower", the Grail, the *Agathon*,

the Philosopher's Stone, *Runa*:

I must, before I die, find some way to say the essential thing that is in me, that I have

never said yet - a thing that is not love or hate or pity or scorn, but the very breath of life,

fierce and coming from far away, bringing into human life the vastness and the fearful

passionless force of non-human things ... - Bertrand Russell, quoted in Colin Wilson's *The*

Mind Parasites

My final charge to the Temple of Set as High Priest of Set is therefore simply to never forget

this Gift of Set as the central force underlying our many specialized arts, sciences, investigations,

applications, experiments, and pleasures.

The Italian automobile constructor Enzo Ferrari was world-renowned for the sensuous, feral

machines he created, as well as for the melodramatic controversies that constantly swirled around

his explosive personality. Some revered him as a saint; others hated his guts; most felt both

emotions simultaneously without any apology for inconsistency. As with Asimov, Hoffer, Russell,

and Nietzsche, the magnetism and the immortality of the Ferrari phenomenon lay in something

much more subtle and powerful than mere skill at building exotic cars. In Enzo's spiritual

testament he finally revealed his secret:

... ho dedicato la mia vita all'automobile: una conquista di libertà per l'uomo ... [I

have devoted my life to the automobile, which has won the human race its freedom.]

And there you have it again. He sought to capture in machinery what a Blake did in art, a

Vaughan Williams in music, a Milton in prose, a Clark Ashton Smith in poetry: the ecstasy of

surpassing one's presumed limitations of self, of shattering the spear of the universe that is with a

self-created sword of the universe yet to Come Into Being. The Children of Set must never aspire

to less.

I appreciate beyond expression all the encouragement, support, affection, and loyalty you have

so graciously extended to me as High Priest of Set these many years. And I look forward to

enjoying with you many more mysteries of the Great Black Magic as it continues to illuminate for

us horizons beyond our darkest dreams.

At the Set-XVII International Conclave in San Francisco that November, Set, speaking

through his Council of Nine, entrusted his High Priesthood to Magus Don Webb, who for the

subsequent 1-1/2 decades far exceeded my own contributions and competence in that office.

When it was formally transferred, he presented me with an engraved black-marbled plaque on

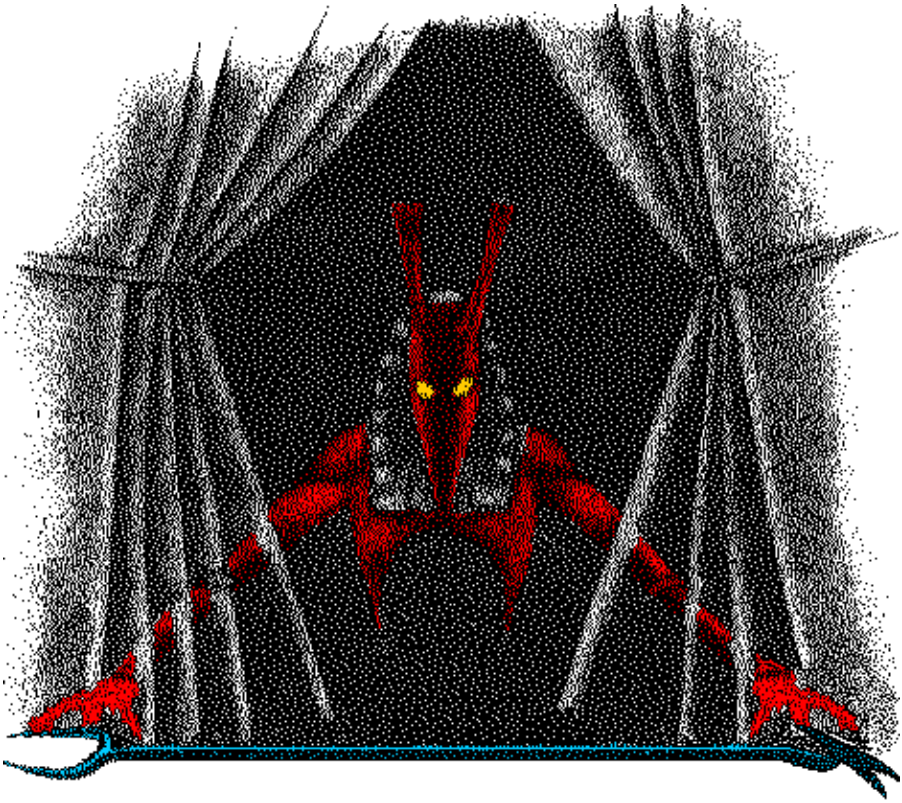
behalf of the Temple. Beneath a mirror-engraved Pentagram of Set is inscribed:

For Michael A. Aquino

A STELA

Composed on the First Day of the Egyptian New
Year as a Magical Link of the eternal Respect, Love
and Blessings that flow to him from the Dwellers
in the *Æ*on of Set now and forever. 8/1/XXXI

I played my flute in the desert night,
and a special few heard the silvery call.
It was as subtle as the gem-hues of the Dark Light,
but it made for the Mind an everlasting Hall.
I gave what I had, which was the Way to the stars,
I gave it with tears and blood and sweat,
I gave it with Love, for with Love it had been made mine.
And they saw my magic treasure, saw it Dark and Fine,
and heard it in their words, and drank it when they met,
and they grew wise on this earth, and shone among the stars.
I will not be remembered by all,
I didn't disturb the sands of time with Might,
but I will always be Remembered by those who Heard the Call,
when I played my flute in the desert night.



Part II: Concepts

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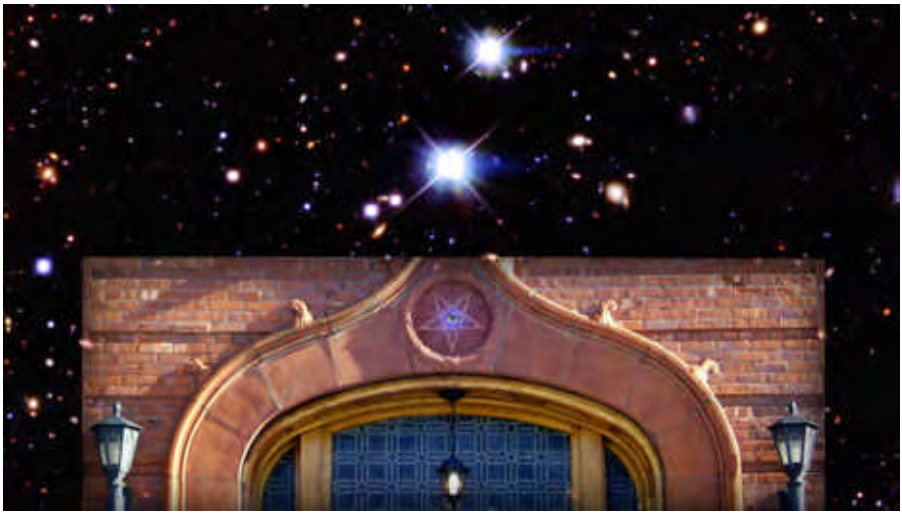

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16: The Black Magical Theory of the Universe

The true nature of what is spiritual and what is merely nonsense is hard to agree upon. A

precise line cannot be drawn between faith, superstition, and science. All we can say without

argument is that there is a larger reality which is beyond our comprehension. We don’t have a

name for it, but we know it exists. In practice we find ourselves breaking through, at times, to an

expanded reality in which we are able to perceive a whole new set of mysteries which were

formerly invisible to us. Then we discover the limitations of this new awareness and must break

through yet again. This process is, as far as I have been able to discern, endless.

Ultimately no amount of study will lead us to the whole truth. Even if we work continually for

a lifetime, we will never come to the end of our explorations about truth. This is where faith comes

in. We accept the truth of theories we cannot prove, and in that way perceive the whole picture,

though its complete structure is beyond our understanding.

- David Carradine, *The Spirit of Shaolin*, 1991

A. Theory

Before advancing the theory identified by the title of this chapter, it may be useful to review

just what any “theory” is - and what it is not.

Definition: **A theory is an organized set of ideas about reality.**

Why is theory useful? (1) It enables data to be ordered. (2) It requires that the criteria of

selection of problems for analysis be made explicit. (3) It is an instrument for understanding

similarities and differences.

Theories can be **descriptive** (classifying a phenomenon or placing it within a conceptual

framework) or **prescriptive** (advancing a set of norms or values).

One must assess a theory either as (1) a passionate statement or (2) an honest attempt to

state truth.

A theory should be critiqued on the plane of its logic and internal consistency, **not** on the

basis of its popular acceptance and influence [this echoes Plato's condemnation of what he

derisively called the "democratization of truth"].

The only absolutely general standard of rational criticism is that a theory mustn't contain

mutually-contradictory propositions.

B. Types of Theories

Ethical theories express some degree of preference or distaste about reality in accordance

with certain a priori standards of evaluation. Some ethical theories state ideal goals towards

which reality ought to be changed. [Chapter #19 contains ethical theories.]

Metaphysical theories are attempts to discover the ultimate nature of reality transcending

the observable. [This chapter contains metaphysical theories.]

Empirical theories are generalizations about observable realities. [This chapter contains

empirical theories preliminary to and supportive of the metaphysical theories presented.]

A **political** theory is a disinterested search for knowledge of political and social reality. It is

a set of empirically-validated, logically-ordered, and functionally-related propositions about the

actual political behavior of individuals and societies. It contains (1) factual statements about the

existing posture of affairs, (2) causal statements about probabilities, and (3) value statements.

[Chapter #19 contains political theories as an illustration and application of the ethical theories

treated.]

C. The Multiverse

Before one can venture an intelligent decision concerning what to do with one's existence,

one must know what that existence is and in what environment it is situated. Many of history's

major religions and philosophies came into being in order to address this problem. While some

of their proposed explanations are æsthetically and/or emotionally attractive and have gained

many devotees, this in itself does not make any one of them **true** - merely popular.

The Temple of Set proposes its solution after having considered and dismissed the

alternatives as **untrue** in whole or in part. We consider our position to be the only correct one -

not because we are intolerant of competition or comparison, but rather because we do not accept

the notion of coexisting but incompatible "truths". If there is an evident fallacy or unknown

factor in the truth as we understand it, then we must address and if possible correct it - or at

least identify the fallacy or factor and qualify the stated truth accordingly. But to say "ours is just

one approach, and many others are just as good" is an evasion of responsibility and would

reduce the concept of "truth" to merely a matter of whim [or

popularity].

Most humans assume “the Universe” to be the totality of existence, by which they mean the

physical assemblage of matter and energy along with whatever presence humanity has within it.

This necessarily reduces that human presence to a mere aspect or reflection of that physicality.

Setian philosophy rejects such crude oversimplification as both factually inaccurate and

intellectually lazy. Since “uni-” implies a whole, we begin by replacing “the Universe” with

“**Multiverse**”: an infinite multiplicity of -verses. This Multiverse is divided into a single

assemblage of matter/energy [balanced cosmically by an equivalence of antimatter and

antienergy] which we shall call the **Objective Universe (OU)**, and individual perceived and/or

created -verses generated by each self-aware conscious entity: **Subjective Universes (SU)**.

D. The Objective Universe

1. Origin

The issue of the origin of the OU is crucial to conventional religions and most philosophies.

There are two alternatives:

• Something created it at a point in time, or

• It has always existed, and therefore no creating agent was/is necessary.

Since infinites of anything can only be theoretically conceptualized, and then with great

difficulty, most humans find the “created” option easier to assume. If this option is true,

however, it necessitates the existence of a creative, originating agency prior and superior to the

OU: conventionally called “gods”/“God”. This in turn necessitates an origin and source for said

g/God(s), which then requires an even higher/prior source, *ad infinitum*. Conventional human

religions generally limit the conversation to just the first g/G, considering that difficult enough

with which to grapple. [This of course does not make the annoying “higher/prior” question go

away.]

Similarly swept under the rug is the reason for the OU’s creation and composition.

Conventional religions simply presume that g/G did it on whim, which is as good an answer as

any. Nevertheless in the latter part of the 20th Century CE this consideration annoyed an upstart

field of philosophy called “Existentialism”, which, in the vernacular of one of its laureates Jean-

Paul Sartre, regarded the phenomenon of physical existence to be intrusive, jarring, and obscene

to the point of causing “nausea” in the human apprehender. The implicit premise is that a

totality of nonexistence, an “absentiverse”, would be more serene. While abstractly that is hard

to dispute, it also begs the question: The OU is very obviously **here**; and, nauseated or not,

humans must deal with it. [Existentialists tend to shun a reasoned solution in favor of

unmotivated instinct.]

Additionally with the “creation” option there is the question of “the artist’s canvas”. The OU

consists of a presumably finite amount of extant phenomena: the aforementioned matter/

antimatter/energy. Beyond this composition lies ... what? A theoretically infinite expanse of

nothingness? Does such an “unpainted canvas” also necessitate its original establishment? Or, as

Existentialism postulates, is it a state of inherent purity requiring absolutely nothing external to

its nonself?

As if these causality consequences aren’t annoying enough in themselves, they also imply a

unidirectional timeline from creation to omnipresence or entropic exhaustion. This in turn

implies a purpose to the process, and for intelligent beings a mission for them. It is just such a

mission that conventional religions profess to recognize and advocate.

The alternative to this creation presumption and all of its baggage is almost blissful in its

simplicity: It is that there was no point or purpose of creation, no ultimate end, and of course no

pathway or mission between them. Rather the OU has always existed as it is, and always will

continue to. No “creative concept” or agency is thus needed. The concept of “time” refers to the

measurement of changing objects/energies and the relationships between them, but is

meaningless in terms of some overall forced-march. In time-theory a directed OU is

characterized by “linear time”, and its destination called “eschatology”. The conventional religion

of Judaism and its Christian and Islamic variations are eschatological, which accounts for their

climate of dogmatic belief and obedience.

By contrast, ancient metaphysical schools such as that of Egypt perceived time as “cyclical”

or “circular”. Virtue and healthy living were sought in harmony with the constant cycles and

permanences of nature, for which there was no element of urgency. In the millennia of recorded

Egyptian history, there was no essential difference between the first and the last dynasties save

in their incarnated personalities. “Progress” would have been thought an odd notion indeed.

Cosmologically the Temple of Set inclines to the timelessness of the second existential

option. The *neteru* - the universal Principles espoused by Ayesha, the Forms of Pythagoras and

Plato - were, are, and will be eternal in the precise sense of that term. Worship of them is to be

found in harmony, not slavery.

2. Enforcement: Proof of the *Neteru*

While there is no necessity to establish creation of the OU *per se*, its stability and

perpetuation is another matter entirely. Everywhere and at every moment it is characterized by

consistency in its behavior: what philosophers generally refer to as “**natural law**”. This

consistency exists, the OU is not a random, kaleidoscopic chaos, because a force greater than it,

beyond it, insists upon its structure and order: the *neteru*.

The collective natural law of the *neteru* is perceived, identified, and interrelated by human

beings for the simple reason that their consciousness is apart from it and can thus apprehend it.

It is this "ability of perspective" which is a characteristic of the "*neter* not of the *neteru*": Set.

It is this same Setian perspective, this "otherness", which enables beings with the Gift of Set

to imagine and create in disregard of natural law, or more accurately in various

"rearrangements", as in reshaping the wood of a tree into a table or creating fantastic works of

art, music, architecture, and literature.

In judicious sensitivity and æsthetics such straying from natural law is both harmless and

stimulating. However when humankind seeks to disrupt or destroy the harmony of the *neteru* at

its most essential and sublime, the consequences can be truly blasphemous, as in the haphazard

destabilization of atomic order to produce fission and fusion bombs of dreadful destructiveness.

In the conceit of "mastering nature", rash scientists may well find that it is easier to open

forbidden doors than to safely close them.

3. Contentment in Plato's Cave

In his *Republic* Plato allegorizes a darkened cave in which the ignorant are chained so that

they cannot see the daylight outside. It is the calling of the true philosopher, admonishes Plato,

to unchain these prisoners and enable them to find their way to the light.

Where the ordering and enforcement of nature - the super-nature, the *neteru* - are

concerned, there are two classes of cave-dwellers who don't see them: **atheists** and **agnostics**.

While Setians are under no obligation to unchain them, a few clarifications are in order

concerning them. By way of mitigation it may be acknowledged that their attitudes are generally

in rejection of the emotionally vulgar and sadistic God of Judaism/ Christianity/Islam, not the

more subtle and sublime *neteru* of the Egyptians.

Atheists maintain that no conscious or intelligent entity exists either "as" nature or, even

more nonsensibly, "above" it. The OU is a nonconscious, automatic machine, nothing more. How

it came to exist, and why it behaves as it does, are therefore "unanswerable questions", to which

it is pointless to expend any time or attention. In support of their intransigence atheists point to

the complete absence of any actual supernatural discretionary behavior apart from mythology.

Agnostics consider themselves more reasonable by merely asserting a lack of evidence one

way or the other: God cannot be proved or disproved, so the only sensible course is to table the

question, presumably indefinitely.

The omnipresence and enforcement of natural law do in fact establish

“supernature”, but at

a level of abstraction beyond the capabilities or comprehension of these contented cave-dwellers.

They may be left to bask undisturbed in their shadow-existence.

Ironically conventional religion-adherents do not counter the aversion of atheists and

agnostics by the straightforward proof of the OU order/enforcement phenomenon discussed

above. It is as though its very obviousness and simplicity blind them to it, like fish unaware of

water because it is “everywhere”. Instead over the centuries they have advanced clumsy,

torturous “proofs”, such as the assumed need for a creator and slavemaster God as imagined in

the Judæo/Christian *Bible*. The absence of evidence is expected to be overcome by “faith”, e.g.

completely unsupported belief and trust in such a proclamation. Faith is antithetical to Setian

philosophy.

While atheists and agnostics tend to be unconcerned with what others think, the same

cannot be said for faith-dependent religionists. Ostensibly because reliance upon faith is *prima*

facie ridiculous, the faithful cannot easily endure being the objects of such ridicule. Hence

“heretics” must be ignored, silenced, banished, or killed if not converted. In theocratic cultures

such as the Christian middle ages or modern Islamic totalitarian regimes, torture and execution

were and are not uncommon. In societies wherein conventional churches no longer have such

power, lesser prejudice an ostracism substitute.

Thus, while Setians may not regard themselves or their philosophy as actively threatening

conventional religion, that is not at all the reciprocal perception, as most recently highlighted by

the “Satanic Panic” witch-hunts of the 1980s.

E. The Subjective Universe

The Subjective Universe (SU) is each self-conscious being’s perception of the OU, blended

with personally-generated overlays, selective impressions, and creative imagination as

instinctive, indoctrinated, inspired, and/or initiated.

Thus not even the most controlled physical scientist can claim to accurately and completely

see the OU. What he sees is his filtration and distortion of it through his SU, which he has built

up both consciously and subconsciously from innumerable sources since birth.

More creative, artistic, mystical, etc. personalities may let their SUs run even more freely, to

the point where the OU is of only occasional and necessary relevance to them. If some such

persons reach a stage where their SUs have completely replaced the OU, they may be called

“insane”; in this sense “sanity” is a measure of an individual’s suppression of his SU within

socially-sanctioned boundaries.

F. Subjective/Objective Interaction

Once the simultaneous and permanent existence of the OU and SU is recognized, much of

the mystery of human history and behavior is no longer mysterious. It just requires examination

of each such individual, group, and/or event to identify the applicable OU forces and the various

individual SUs through which they are being perceived and influenced, both subconsciously and

consciously.

At the subconscious level, for instance, an individual may assume that everyone else “sees

the same reality” that he does, when in fact this is never completely the case.

At the conscious level the SU can be both easier and more problematic to handle. Easier to

the extent that the individual is making willful decisions about how much of his SU he can

successfully apply. More problematic insofar as others with their differing subconscious and

conscious SUs may be present and involved.

G. Collective Subjective Universes

When more than one SU is present and involved in any society or problem situation, it

should be obvious that no two of them will coincide, both in terms of subconscious “reality

perception” and conscious values, desires, and actions applied.

Hence both human society and human history is most accurately understood as attempts by

the involved humans to reconcile their conflicting SUs into one or more community-approved

Collective SUs (hereafter “CSU”). Sometimes this is possible through peaceful means such as

education, reasoning, or argument. In other instances where conscious SUs are too passionate,

or when subconscious SUs are too inflexible and intolerant, the individuals/groups may resort to

coercion - aggressive and intensive indoctrination, conditioning, and reinforcement, along with

the suppression or extermination of the offending “competitors” - to achieve the desired

“reality”.

In modern society, unsurprisingly, such coercion and intolerance are invariably attributed

to “the enemy”, domestic outlaws, insurgents, revolutionaries, or other “alien” individuals or

groups. It is assumed, without any need for argument or justification, that the community CSU

into which its members have been conditioned since birth, is not just one among many options,

but is “reality”. Questioning it thus goes beyond acceptable curiosity to “heresy”, “treason”, or

“insanity”.

This was most famously caricatured in George Orwell’s novel *1984*, in which failure to

accept the Party’s CSU not just at the conscious but at the subconscious “reality” level was

condemned as the worst of all possible sins: “thoughtcrime” - correspondingly requiring not just

punishment but “curing” by destroying the offender’s ability to see “reality” other than through

the Party's CSU.

H. The Judæo-Christian Soul

Judaism is most significant from a CSU standpoint for its introduction of the concept of

"original sin", according to which every human begins, lives, and ends his or her life under a

curse and condemnation from Judaism's God. This "greatest of all sins" resulted from Adam and

Eve innocently and ignorantly eating a fruit in the Garden of Eden which gave them individual

SUs: awareness of their freedom to assign meaning and evaluations of goodness and evilness

according to their own intelligence and experience, not God's. In effect they had ceased to be

non-conscious components of the OU, and this separation was the "greatest sin". Implicitly their

OU-separation from their eating of the fruit was also passed along to all of their descendants,

who similarly inherited the same inescapable sin.

Consider the effect this CSU has had upon all of the civilizations in its grip: the entire Jewish,

Christian, and Muslim world down through the centuries. Humanity is taught that it is

inherently and inescapably evil, so much so that even the most strenuous of purging and

punitive lifestyles, such as monasticism, nunnery, celibacy, etc., are futile. Only through the

intercession of divine saviors such as Jesus Christ and Mohammed can a fortunate few humans

hope for even posthumous relief. For everyone else this life is a journey of misery followed by an

eternity of torture. In its original, pre-Christian “Hell” concept, ancientMesopotamians

[including the Hebrews] considered the underworld (*Kur-nu-gi-a* or *Sheol*) as a dim, dismal

place in which the once-incarnate soul disintegrated. Hence their approach to life was fatalistic

and pessimistic, with ethics considered in terms of Earthly consequences only.

Contrast this with the culture of ancient Egypt, in which there was neither “original” nor

“inherited” sin. Each individual was born a blank slate, so to speak, and had full discretion to

pursue an incarnation of virtue or vice, after which, at the entrance to the Afterlife, the

deceased’s heart would be “weighed against a feather” to fairly ascertain whether pleasure or

penance had been earned.

The Judaic soul, unlike anything in Egyptian metaphysics, was thus something shameful,

reprehensible, and evil. What could families, communities, or nations composed of such flawed

and doomed creatures hope to accomplish? If they could not save themselves in the greater

sense, of what value were efforts towards morality, virtue, and other behaviors supposed to

please if not placate God?

It wasn’t until the late-17th/early-18th century CE “Enlightenment” that Judæo-Christianity

ceased to be regarded as literal truth and became merely a propaganda tool for controlling the

ignorant and superstitious. Thereafter, and to this day, it receives extensive lip service and

ceremony, but without the intelligentsia or even its own cadre regarding it as anything more

than a fairytale. Neither God nor Jesus nor Satan is regarded as anything more than a

convenient symbolic myth.

It therefore takes some effort to cast oneself back to pre-Enlightenment times when all such

influences were held to be quite real indeed, and so the determinants of human actions. Once

this is appreciated, the Crusades, religious wars, sect-persecutions, and "heathen" civilization

exterminations are coldly understandable not as aberrations but as the God-sanctioned norm of

human conduct.

The Enlightenment relegation of Judæo-Christianity from truth to fiction was echoed in its

concept of the soul. Previously the soul had been a real, tangible object of fear and self-hatred

within each human. Now that it was eliminated, society had to develop new devices to entice or

coerce the dominant CSU. We shall survey these devices as they were introduced and are still

used today, but before doing so, we need to clear away the remaining wreckage from the popular

notion of the soul, and return again to Egypt for completeness and clarity.

From *Webster's International Dictionary*:

soul: (1) The immaterial essence or substance, animating principle, or actuating cause of life

or of the individual life. (2a) The psychical or spiritual principle in general shared by or embodied

in individual human beings or all beings having a rational and spiritual nature. (2b) The psychical

or spiritual nature of the universe related to the physical world as the human soul to the human

body ...

While a superficially-impressive attempt, this definition finally falls back on empty

circularity. What is an “animating principle”, and would the soul not exist if it did not animate

externalities? What is meant by “psychical” and “spiritual”? As Robert Anton Wilson quipped in

Schrödinger’s Cat: “Theology was a system for explaining things by coining words which nobody

could understand and pretending that the words meant something.” [55]

I. The Setian Soul: MindStar

How then can each soul find and see itself, since it is a singularity which each individual

cannot “get outside of”? This harks back to philosophers such as Descartes, who sought, one

might say Quixotically, to “prove” their conscious existence. “Proof” is of necessity external, as

discussed above, so Descartes’ famous *Cogito Ergo Sum* (I think, therefore I am) is futile: It is

impossible to describe a “thought” which is not the composite of external sensory input.

No, conceptual thought (Kant’s “pure reason”, Plato’s *nœsis*, Nietzsche’s “horizon building”)

begins from the pure, unsupported apprehension of one’s conscious

self as an existential reality:

the *ba* of ancient Egypt, the *psyche* of the Greeks, the Golden Flower of the *Tao*, the soul of

Judæo-Christianity, identifying, in the words of Dr. Raghavan Iyer, "... not the shadowy self or

false egoity which merely reacts to external stimuli. Rather there is that Eye of Wisdom in every

person which in deep sleep is fully awake and which has a translucent awareness of self-

consciousness as pure, primordial light."

Indeed as this "pure, primordial light" is brought fully into focus, none of the above labels

seems completely adequate or accurate. Some, like Kant's and Nietzsche's, address expression

rather than essence. The Egyptian realization of the complete essence was multifold: not limited

55 Wilson, Robert Anton, *Schrödinger's Cat*. New York: Pocket Books, 1979, page #98.

to the *ba*. For this discussion, therefore, I propose a fresh term, inspired by Dr. Iyer's sublime

description above:

... being the self-contained, self-sustaining concentration of essence

which exists as the core of

the conscious mind. This new term not only frees us from the limitations and

preconceptualizations of old labels; it is a constant reminder that the present examination is a

fresh, evolutionary one in which we cannot be content to coast on inaccurate or inadequate

myths or stereotypes.

Thus emboldened, therefore, let us return to *anamnesis* to address the question of the

MindStar's ability to interact with a temporary physical body while not itself containing any

element of the OU. [In conventional conversation this is often referred to as the "mind/body

problem".] The key we bring to this lock is that of **fields**.

J. Fields

1. Definition

What exactly is a "field"? When something occurs somewhere in the OU because something

else happens somewhere else in the OU, by no detectible means by which the cause produces the

effect, the two events are said to be connected by a "field" [well-known examples being gravity

and magnetism].

Understandably OU scientists don't like fields. To the extent they remain fields in defiance of

all attempts to connect their events, they are inconvenient and annoying refutations of one of the

most sacred OU cows: the law of cause and effect. Science's fallback excuse is that the law must

apply to every field phenomenon too; the medium just hasn't been discovered yet. Sometimes,

even more desperately, scientists hypothesize completely fantastic "missing links", such as

"gravitons", to emulate Robert Anton Wilson's amusing explanation of conventional religious

jargon. Leaving both scientists and theologians thrashing about in this terminological quicksand,

let us proceed to a very special type of field: that integral with thehuman body.

2. Life-Fields

The human body is an electromagnetic machine. As such it both generates and is enveloped

by electromagnetic fields (EMF), controlling everything from heartbeat and respiration to sleep

and female menstrual cycles.

To understand the significance of EMFs to the human body, it is first necessary to appreciate

that each such body is not an inert, static clump of permanent matter. It is rather an organic

complex in a constant state of reorganization and reconstitution. For instance, human liver and

serum proteins are replaced every 10 days, and the whole of the proteins in the body about every

160 days. Moreover these protein molecules are extremely complex devices, not mere raw

material; not even a single amino acid can be out of place in the replacement.

To put it another way, there are about 60 thousand billion cells in the human body, and every

day about 500 billion of these die and are replaced and rebuilt.

Why? One possibility is that these molecules are so complex that they are inherently unstable

and thus are continuously deteriorating. The metabolic system, including the liquid-based

transmission of food and raw material throughout the body, is a raging furnace of consumption

and regeneration.

How does the body know precisely how to recreate each cell and molecule? It cannot be

within the object itself, because an object cannot “organize itself”.

The answer lies in the existence of an entire layered network of EMFs throughout and within

the body, altogether comprising a “master plan” EMF for it. Dr. Harold Saxon Burr, Professor

Emeritus of Anatomy, Yale School of Medicine, named this the L-Field (for “Life-Field”/LF). 56

In the case of the human body, its organizing system cannot be chemical, because then that

system itself would be subject to the same entropic process. Hence there is more to a human

being than mere chemistry. It requires an organizing field, not merely an accidental

accumulation of proteins; thus the notion of “gene randomness” is invalid.

3. *Telos*

Organization inherently requires **preconception** based upon **purpose**. Conventional

academic doctrine is that living beings’ purpose is selectively the result of environmental survival

needs: Darwinian “natural selection”: There is no inherent purpose to life-forms beyond passive/

reactive survival, avoidance of pain, seeking of pleasure, and instinct to reproduce.

Prior to Darwin’s theory of passive natural selection, the French biologist Jean Baptiste

Lamarck (1744-1829), while not denying such passive evolution, augmented it with what he

termed “soft evolution” (in modern parlance “Lamarckism”). According to this theory,

characteristics developed or acquired by a given living being can be inherited by its progeny, thus

adding the element of intentional purpose to evolution.

If Lamarckism is allowed to operate according to human intellectual will, of course, then the

principle of purpose on the individual human scale is established. This in turn suggests that

there may be a greater element of purpose above and beyond the individual.

While heretical to the Darwinian establishment, such a master-principle of purpose was

neither unknown nor repugnant to the ancients, who by the time it had reached Greece from

Egypt referred to it as *telos*.

Teleology is the doctrine that final causes of phenomena exist. Further that purpose and

design are a part of or are apparent in nature. Further that phenomena are not only guided by

mechanical forces (e.g. passive natural seletion), but also move towards certain goals of self-

realization.

The opposite of teleology is **mechanism**, which describes phenomena in terms of prior

causes instead of their presumed destination or fulfillment. [Modern science is thus

mechanistic.]

The existence of Life-Fields establishes that humanity is teleological, not mechanistic, in its

physical design and development. The species is not a “random OU accident” just stumbling

onward through equally-haphazard “survival of the fittest”. This simple and obvious truth is

shattering to mechanistic science, because it inevitably mandates an intelligence establishing

and guiding the *telos*: the Egyptian *neteru*, Pythagorean/Platonic Forms, or in vulgar

simplification “gods/God”.

But the scientists’ teleological nightmare gets worse [or better, depending upon one’s point of

view] ...

56 Burr, Dr. Harold Saxon, *The Fields of Life: Our Links with the Universe*. NY: Ballantine Books #23559, 1972.

4. Thought-Fields

As it turns out, human thought also has the properties of a field. While Dr. Burr was

conducting his 40 years of research regarding what would eventually emerge as L-Fields, other

academicians were examining mental activity and discovering that it too does not behave as a

“linear machine” [as, for instance, electronic computers running

programs of “artificial

intelligence”]. 57 Among these findings:

(1) Memory is not localized in the brain, except where it is connected to a very

immediate, specific, and continuous sensory function (e.g. perception of heat).

Destroying select, even major areas of the brain does not have a traceable effect

upon the general memory function; other parts of the brain simply “take over”, and

even appear to be re-learning and re-refining supposedly-excised memories. If the

source for such reacquisition is not physical, then it defaults to a field

phenomenon.

(2) Access to memories is also non-linear. One may forget what one had for dinner the

previous evening, while having a crystal-clear recall of information/ imagery

decades previously. The process by which memories are so assorted [as it is a grey-

scale spectrum, not an either/or action] remains unknown.

(3) Memory access is instantaneous, its age or complexity notwithstanding. This again

is non-linear, as computers must go through selection/exclusion sequences to

answer memory-questions.

(4) As Plato illustrated in the *Meno*, the underlying basis of all knowledge - the primal

building-blocks upon which learning and reasoning depend for their accuracy and

coherence - are inherent to each incarnate intelligence: *anamnesis* - "recollective

awareness of the *neteru*/Forms". In non-metaphysical terms, humans know

"instinctively" whether they are thinking reasonably and with validity. [This is not

the same thing, obviously, as processing thoughts on the basis of invalid

information.]

Of course much of what humans know as day-to-day thought is [at least assumed as] linear

[the precise term being "algorithmic"]. Human brains coast through each day largely on sensory

stimulus/response "autopilot", about 95% of which is subconscious. If the avalanche of daily

sensory data had to be dealt with consciously, anything resembling normal human activity would

be quite impossible.

As with Dr. Burr's L-Fields, Mr. Russell's "T-Fields" met with something less than

thunderous enthusiasm in established/conventional scientific circles. It was bad enough for Burr

to discover an external and purposeful intelligence behind human OU/bodily organization and

evolution. It was far worse for the most essential elements of individual human presence-of-

mind to be completely removed from the physical brain. In this devastating one/two blow,

Darwinian mechanism had been completely exploded, with the terrible spectres of "intelligent

57 Dr. Harold Saxon Burr's L-Field research was summed up in his *The*

Fields of Life: Our Links with the Universe

(NY: Ballantine Books #23559, 1972). The first collection of research extending this “fields” concept to thought was

Design for Destiny by Edward W. Russell (NY: Ballantine Books #23405, 1971). Russell was a former newspaper

reporter with an interest in speculative science. While it is admittedly hypothetical, Russell does a commendable

and exhaustive job of identifying and citing both scientific and philosophical sources.

design” and a metaphysical “soul” returning [absent Judæo-Christian trappings] from their post-

Enlightenment banishment.

As these [re]discoveries could not be invalidated or discredited, they met with the academic

establishment’s fallback response: they were simply and persistently ignored.

Except, of course, here.

K. Egyptian MindStar Emanations

To this point we have first cleared away the conventional religious and materialistic wreckage

from the popular concept of the “soul”, and established both the MindStar’s metaphysical

existence and its means of interaction with the OU brain and body.

We are now in a position to identify the elements or “emanations” of the MindStar as the

Egyptians apprehended them. This is thus the “core” of this book, but it cannot be

overemphasized that this is not a mere recitation for the reader’s bemusement. It is a doorway, a

map, by which the individual can redirect the power of discretionary consciousness to its source,

purification, and realization of immortality.

Each of the following eight emanations proceeds from the [more] OU-linked to the [more]

SU-linked. Predictably this makes the more basic ones that much easier to identify based on

their familiar, if subconscious OU-usage. A comparison may be made to Plato's "pyramid of

thought", which in his Dialogues he stratified as *Eikasia* (primitive emotion), *Pistis* (ordinary

active/reactive thinking), *Dianoia* (precise, logical, enlightened thought), and *Nœsis* (intuition

and apprehension of the Ultimate Good (*Agathon*).

The Egyptian priesthoods knew that each living creature was possessed of several existence-

emanations above and beyond the metabolic mind/body. All sentient beings possess the first

four (*khat*, *ren*, *khabit*, *ab*). Beings endowed with the Gift of Set (awareness of isolate self-

consciousness) the next two (*ba*, *ka*) as well as in those of initiatory capacity and attainment the

next one (*sekhem*), and in unique instances the ultimate one (*akh*).

Accordingly each of the following expositions is meant not just as something to be read, but

as a personal application exercise. Upon being alerted to each emanation, redirect your thought

"inward" until you find and recognize it in yourself. You may be surprised at how effortless this

is. [As effortless and self-evident, indeed, as all of the "great truths" presented in *MindStar*, each

of which you find, perhaps to your surprise, that you “know already”. Welcome to *anamnesis*.] It

is a gateway, a map to your personal Grail Castle. Once you know that it exists and is there to be

quested and found, you have only to:

Descende, audas viator, et terrestre centrum attinges. Kod feci.

Descend, audacious traveler, and you will reach the center of the Earth. I did it.

Arne Saknussemm, in

Jules Verne,

Journey to the Center of the Earth, 1864

1. *Khat*

The **body-emanation**. The *khat* is integral with the being’s physical body, and is the

original of what later, lesser cultures would represent as the “energy body”, “body of light”,

“astral body”, etc. In current field theory it constitutes the life-field of the person, controlling and

directing its material counterpart’s organization, regeneration, and span of existence. During

physical life it is coextensive with its material counterpart. After material death it may remain

with the corpse to serve as a medium for the other emanations, or it may merely linger near its

remains. Jungians perceived the *khat* as the “earthbound” *anima*, and in the oriental vision of

the *Golden Flower* it was known as the *kuei*:

Tao the undivided, Great One, gives rise to two opposite reality

principles, Darkness and

Light, *yin* and *yang*. These are at first thought of only as forces of nature apart from man. Later

the sexual polarities, and others as well, are derived from them. From *yin* comes *K'un*, the

receptive feminine principle; from *yang* comes *Ch'ien*, the creative masculine principle. From *yin*

comes *ming* (life); from *yang* comes *hsing* (essence).

Each individual contains a central monad which, at the moment of conception, splits into life

and essence (*ming* and *hsing*). These two are super-individual principles and so can be related to

eros and *logos*.

In the personal bodily existence of the individual they are represented by two other polarities,

a *p'o* soul (or *anima*) and a *hun* soul (or *animus*). All during the life of the individual these two are

in conflict, each striving for mastery. At death they separate and go different ways. The *anima*

sinks to earth as *kuei*, a ghost-being. 58

It is the *khat* which is drawn into or activated from within a corpse in necromantic magical

workings. As the reader may surmise, the *khat* is also the vehicle for the zombie practices of

Voodoo. 59

2. *Ren*

The **name-emanation**. The Egyptians understood the power of names to identify, define,

protect, and empower individuals - most conspicuously in the various names taken by each

pharaoh. Collectively and separately each name affected the very essence of the person, and the

greatest curse [as also illustrated in literature and film] was to be denied all names. 60 Externally

a name can be used to summon or compel, whether physically incarnate or not. The *neteru* also

have the power and the discretion to give names as well as take them, and through such names

to take form and voice.

3. *Khabit*

The **shadow-emanation**. This is the connection of the still-incarnate *khat* with the life-

forces of the natural *neteru*, enabling it to function as the organizing and controlling energy (the

58 *The Secret of the Golden Flower* by Richard Wilhelm (Trans) (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1931. A

classic of Chinese Taoism describing the process of the attainment of transcendental existence by the means of

creating a *mandala* from the personal subconscious. A key influence in the magical philosophy of Golden Dawn

Rosicrucian W.B. Yeats. Cf. also a more recent translation by Thomas Cleary (San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco,

1991).

59 For details of zombification see Wade E. Davis , *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (New York: Warner Books, 1987),

concerning Haitian Voodoo and actual zombie creation - not by supernatural means, but by the secret use of

poisons. The book is based upon field research by the author, who holds undergraduate degrees from Harvard

University in Ethnobotany and Biology, and a Ph.D. in Ethnobotany.

60 For example, in Bram Stoker's *The Jewel of Seven Stars*, the Egyptian priests who sought to prevent the feared

sorceress-Queen Tera from returning to incarnate life attempted to destroy all inscriptions of her name in her tomb,

as well as in other references to her. [They failed.]

In H.P. Lovecraft's *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*, the name and all references to the Colonial sorcerer

Joseph Curwen were tracked down and obliterated by the vigilantes who murdered him.

Elsewhere in exoteric history it was a common practice for Egyptian pharaohs and priesthoods to attempt to

deface or erase the names, images, and monuments of feared or hated predecessors, such as the "heretic"

Akhenaten.

individual "life-field"). If the *khabit* is destroyed, the life-field de-energizes and the physical body

expires. In Black Magic the *khabit* can also be sent out by its owner as an instrument of influence

upon others.

After the physical body is destroyed or no longer needed, the *khabit* becomes an avatar of the

neter Anubis, overseeing guidance of the [noninitiate] consciousness through the incoherence of

the *Tuat* into the stabilization of *Amenti*. An initiated consciousness needs no such guidance.

4. *Ab*

The **heart-emanation**. The physical locus of individual identity and consciousness, hence

the bridge between the OU of the *neteru* and the SU of the four

metaphysical emanations. It is

through the *ab* that an individual realizes and recognizes incarnate identity and uniqueness, and

following destruction/expiration of one's body it is through the *ab* that one can reenter the OU

[as a "ghost", through "possession" (more precisely merger with another, incarnate *ab*), or

through thought-transference].

It is also in the *ab* that the strength and quality of one's *maat* (inclination to "good" or "evil")

reposes. This is echoed in the later Indian mythologies of *karma*, and was the reason for the

posthumous "weighing of the heart against a feather" in Egypt. After bodily death the *maat*

within the *ab* overwhelms it completely, so that any subsequent manifestation in the OU is likely

to be an extreme concentration of either beneficence or malevolence.

5. *Ba*

The **core-emanation**. This is each sentient being's sense of self-awareness, of unique and

absolute distinction from everything else (both other sentient beings and the entire OU). Thus it

is the manifestation, or Gift, of Set, the *neter* of non-nature, in each so-conscious entity.

The *ba* becomes stronger through increased self-exploration and -realization: the initiatory

process of *Xeper*. Unlike natural initiation, which draws the individual into alignment, harmony,

and ultimately conscious absorption into and indistinction from one or more of the natural

neteru, *Xeper* of the *ba* does not dissolve the self into Set, but attains and sustains a cohesive

essence of its own.

The *anamnesis* or "remembered knowledge" experienced by the slave boy in Plato's *Meno* is

perhaps more accurately described as the physical-process, stimulus/response brain reaching in

to the *ba* for bits of its immortal, eternal wisdom. But this is akin to reaching for a coal in a hot

fire. It is stressful to do, and the result can be held only for a fleeting moment without further

stress. The superficial/physical "self", which through material "hits" continuously reassures itself

that it is the only self, is shaken by exposure to its falseness, its nothingness. It backs away from

such "close encounters", dismisses them as "illusions", "fantasy", "imagination", etc., and

hastens to rebuild its fortress of material-sensation walls.

Absent Setian orientation and initiation, a *ba* simply continues as one's sense of identity, thus

the "essential self" around which all of the other souls coalesce and recognize themselves. Within

noninitiates this results in the *ba* being sensed as a dreamy, meditative "state of being" which, if

indulged in with persistence and intensity, leads to its overwhelming the other souls, hence

"*nirvana*" and similar states of *ba*-ecstasy.

6. *Ka*

The **transmigration-emanation**. The *ka* is the complete mirror-image of all eight natural

and non-natural emanations, fused into an avatar, *Doppelgänger*, or Horla, a completely

metaphysical remanifestation of oneself which can exist and displace without limit, both within

the non-natural universe generated by one's *ba* and within the physical universe of the natural

neteru as well.

It is the *ka* that, through the *ab*, enters the natural universe through "identity gates" such as

pictures or statues of the individual, or utterance of the individual's name(s) (the *ren*), as well as

through conducive locales such as temples and geological & architectural anomalies.

While the *ba* may, particularly posthumously, lose awareness of itself through the

paradoxical expansion of that consciousness into its entire perceptive field, the *ka* remains

immortally finite, distinct, and otherness-separate. Thus in an expressive, active sense it

becomes the externally-identifiable individual beyond physical death.

Nowhere is the *ka* better illustrated than in initiate Bram Stoker's *The Jewel of Seven Stars*.

Film treatments of this work, such as Hammer's *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb* and the more

recent *The Awakening*, have done it a grotesque disservice. In Stoker's original text it is in no

sense a horror story, but rather a fascinating and romantic mystery: Who was Tera of ancient

Egypt, this marvelous sorceress-queen who took with her to her tomb only a ruby scarab

inscribed with the constellation of the Thigh of Set (our “Great Bear”) and the hieroglyphs *mer*

(love) and *men ab* (patience)? Listen to the words of the woman of our own era with whose *ka*

Tera came gently to merge:

I can see her in her loneliness and in the silence of her mighty pride, dreaming her own dream

of things far different from those around her. Of some other land, far away under the canopy of

the silent night, lit by the cool, beautiful light of the stars. A land under that Northern star,

whence blew the sweet winds that cooled the feverish desert air. A land of wholesome greenery,

far, far away. Where were no scheming and malignant priesthood; whose ideas were to lead to

power through gloomy temples and more gloomy caverns of the dead, through an endless ritual of

death! A land where love was not base, but a divine possession of the soul! Where there might be

some one kindred spirit which could speak to hers through mortal lips like her own; whose being

could merge with hers in a sweet communion of soul to soul, even as their breaths could mingle in

the ambient air! I know the feeling, for I have shared it myself. I may speak of it now, since the

blessing has come into my own life. I may speak of it since it enables me to interpret the feelings,

the very longing soul, of that sweet and lovely Queen, so different from her surroundings, so high

above her time! Whose nature, put into a word, could control the forces of the Under World; and

the name of whose aspiration, though but graven on a star-lit jewel, could command all the

powers in the Pantheon of the High Gods. And in the realisation of that dream she will surely be

content to rest!

In Love and Patience we are taught the secret of true immortality - not the repulsive

reanimation of corpses (*anastasis nekron*) of Christianity, nor the vague confusion of

reincarnationists - but the infinite radiance of one's MindStar by its most magnificent

expression, and with a serene transcendence of natural time.

The last two souls are unique in that they must arise from the individual, and require initiate

consciousness to do so, per the formula *Xepera Xeper Xeperu* ("I Have Come Into Being and

Created That Which Has Come Into Being.").

7. *Sekhem*

The ***neter*-emanation**. While the term *sekhem* is ordinarily translated as "power", this is

misleading, because it is power in a very rarified sense - that emanating from the *neteru*

themselves. For this reason it is also described as "the power of the stars" through which the

neteru manifest in the natural universe. The *sekhem* combines with the *ab* (as, in effect, a temple

within one's consciousness), to draw down the essence of one or more adored *neteru* to indwell

therein.

Activation of the *sekhem* has another effect: every incidence infuses the Initiate with more of

the neter invoked, to the cumulative degree that the Initiate's personality becomes accented by

the *neter*'s: seeing as that *neter* sees, speaking as that *neter* would speak, acting as that *neter*

would act. Hence it is the *sekhem* which makes possible, and ultimately consecrates priesthood

of a *neter* in the individual so aligned. Once this transformation has taken place, it cannot be

undone; at most it may be sublimated or repressed, but only at great cost to the priest's or

priestess' very sanity.

8. *Akh*

The **star-emanation**. Beyond the priesthood of the *sekhem* is the *akh*, in which the Initiate

rises to the company of the *neteru* as one of their essence, if not of them absolutely. Such one is

indistinguishable from the actual *neteru* except by the *neteru* themselves. Such a mode of

existence departs completely from all concern with physical displacement within natural-

universal references or boundaries, manifestation, or action, and affects otherness only by the

radiance of its presence. While it does not destroy any of the other emanations, it permeates all

of them, such that henceforth they all exist in conformity and concert with it.

L. Consciousness

Having established and defined the OU/SU environment in which existence occurs, it is next

necessary to discuss who or what exists to perceive and interact with this environment. A

phenomenon of distinction from that environment is essential, and it must be aware of itself to

recognize and appreciate that distinction. It is inherently a function, not a thing, traditionally

called “consciousness”.

Consciousness is both easy and difficult to establish - easy because its presence is obvious:

the mere awareness [of self and/or anything else] characteristic of a living, sentient being.

Having achieved this realization, the possessors of consciousness have found its constitution

maddeningly elusive.

Over the centuries theologians, philosophers, and scientists have sought to portray and

advocate consciousness as something either supporting or refuting the existence of what is really

their concern: the “soul”.

1. Metaphysics: Consciousness as an Entity

Since conventional theology regards consciousness as “the soul in action”, it has generally

been happy to just blur the two concepts into a single, nothing-further-needed axiom of religious

faith.

Philosophers seeking to escape the label of such mere faith found that the moment they

strayed from the simple act of self-awareness, they were actually addressing other issues, such as

whether physical sensory input is/was occurring, whether such input

is reliable, and indeed

whether the mental processing of concepts and information (e.g. “thought”) should somehow be

either a requirement or evidence of awareness. René Descartes’ famous “*cogito ergo sum*” (= I

think, therefore I am) is an example of such off-the-mark confusion; arguments both pro and

con this maxim have all focused on the act of thinking rather than mere self-awareness.

2. Physics: Consciousness as an Illusion

Modern physical science is adamantly materialistic; any hint of a metaphysical presence or

activity is tantamount to heresy. If consciousness exists, therefore, it must be explainable [away]

as the physical brain generating some form of illusory self-imagery.

In support of this theory, scientists note that if the brain is anæsthetized, the individual

“blacks out”. Also when the body and brain sleep, consciousness either blacks out or becomes

merely a spectator to hallucination (e.g. dreaming).

Upon examination both of these scientific claims fail to be conclusive. As ordinary

consciousness is accustomed to being reactive to physical sensory input, the sudden muting of all

such input by anæsthesia throws the consciousness into a sudden non-sensory mode with which

it has no experience. The result is temporary inactivity, though below the level of sensory

imagery it continues to receive stimulus signals from the physical

body.

In certain anæsthesia applications, moreover, the body's transmissions to the consciousness

are muted while that consciousness remains alert and communicative. If it were merely a

function of the body's normal physical sensory processes, this would not occur.

Where sleep and dreaming are concerned, it has already been established that the quality and

coherence of the act of thinking is an entirely different concern than self-awareness *per se*.

Where ordinary sleep and dreaming are concerned, once again awareness must not be

confused with thinking. In short, the random imagination characteristic of dreams, or the

absence of such experiences if the resting brain has so lowered its sensory transmissions, has no

relevance to awareness. Being self-aware does not require this to be continuous.

3. Inconsequence

The phenomenon of self-awareness is as a simple incident essential to validating the

distinction between the individual and the OU. Beyond this, however, it is not a component of

either a "soul" or the physical brain/body which can be used to verify either premise. Indeed in

the search for the "soul" awareness is something of a red herring, being confused with the

thinking process by agenda-advocates.

4. The Platonic "Pyramid of Thought"

The concept of an individual's transcending a "threshold of consciousness" is among the most

ancient of recorded human experience. In various cultures and countries it has been known as

"initiation", "enlightenment", "illumination", "awakening", etc. [This is **not** the same thing as

bodily "rites of passage" involving puberty/admission to an adult community. Those of course

happen to all in that community; by contrast only a relative few encounter and confront

initiation.]

Human consciousness consists of both self-awareness and the sensation of phenomena that

are "not the self". At the most base level, these are little more than instinct and stimulus/

response. An individual can [and many do] go through an entire physical lifetime in this mode of

dull relaxation. In Book VII of his *Republic* Plato symbolized this as a "cave" in which ordinary

humanity is "chained facing the inner wall, on which only faint reflections can be seen". The

initiate (Plato's "philosopher") breaks free or is freed by an initiator. What he then confronts and

experiences is the challenge, ordeal, and promise of initiation, as summarized by Raghavan Iyer

in his *Parapolitics*:

The upward ascent, which involves pain and struggle, will only be valid because of an

exact correspondence between levels of reality, modes of knowing, and states of being.

Who a man is reflects and determines what he really knows, which is connected with

what he regards as real.

Man determines what and to what degree things, objects of desire, and values will be

real for him. To this extent it is tempting to agree with Protagoras that "man is the

measure of all things".

But as a reality-assigning agent, man is confronted with the philosophical question

which Protagoras, a sophist and epistemological relativist, did not face: What is it about

the world of nature that allows the existence of such a reality-assigning agent?

There must be a sense in which there is a reality **independent** of individual minds

and wills. There is also a subtle interplay between the reality that cannot be wholly

grasped by the individual, and his own capacity to make that reality come alive through

the self-conscious exercise of his reality-assigning function. He is able to grow in a

direction that is in harmony with the whole of nature.

If a man truly embodies what is implicit in the ascent from the Cave, he must realize

the extent to which time and nature are on his side. He must prevail, but this idea of

prevailing is much subtler and more elusive than any crude conception of survival or

power.

His moral growth is marked by an increase in the intensity and potency of his power of

thought and ideation. The crucial assumption is that **the mind of man, at any stage,**

is engaged in a mode of participation in planes of awareness divided into

objects existing in relation to interdependent categories of space, time, and

perception.

There are four stages of cognition on the “divided line’ [between intellectual and

sensory knowledge] that may be viewed in this way.

At the lowest level of *eikasia* are **instantaneity** and **localization**, the prison of the

“here and now”. To be caught up in them is to be so lacking in critical distance from a

given setting that nothing else can be seen.

This mole-like life is restless, fantasy-ridden, and competitive in the extreme. It is

often characterized through analogies with rodents or insects. At this level of existence we

engage in activities demeaning to the human status and even abdicate the privilege of

being human.

Such analogies usually tend to malign animals, because people cannot do what animals

do with the natural precision of instinct. Nonetheless this stage of consciousness is quite

recognizable.

Above it lies a second stage, *pistis*, which is much more dangerous

than the first

because it is the realm of **pseudo-absolutization**. It is characterized by opinions and

ideologies that are only relatively true and therefore relatively false.

The knowledge gained by comparison and contrast is contingent and not necessarily

true. Many questions relative to space and time arise. Suppose someone advances the

view that it is human nature to be selfish. One might ask what makes him say this? Where

did he pick it up? What does it mean to him? How does he interpret it? Such questions

begin to bring out the relativity of such assertions.

Human beings at this stage, however, do not like the relativity of their opinions to be

shown, and tend to convey their assertions without qualification as if they were totally

true. They are made to look like immutable maxims, although if they were they would give

strength and enable individuals or societies to maintain themselves without need of

constant reinforcement. They would not leave people afraid of questions, or unable to

consider the possibility of other ways of formulating similar truths. But pseudo-

absolutization goes with dogmatism of the most insecure kind, which must be reinforced

from outside by polls and by power, by this, that, and the other.

In the third stage, *dianoia*, there are still limitations of space and time,

but with a

relative freedom from the “here and now”, and a cleaving to universal generalizations of

given axioms.

The supreme example is mathematics. Yet even the most central axioms in

mathematics are conventional, and are based upon apparently arbitrary assumptions.

In the third stage the degree of freedom from the relativities of space and time may be

secured at the cost of being unaware of lurking presuppositions which can act as mental

blinders. This problem can be mitigated by critical distance wherein assumptions serve as

aids to further questioning, leading to their step-by-step removal by treating them as

hypotheses and stairways of ascent until the fourth stage is reached, or at least sensed.

The fourth stage is *nœsis*, in which there is almost total freedom from the ordinary

limitations of space and time.

There is a need to be flexible in formulation to progress beyond the third stage. But

once the fourth stage is entered, there is a ready recognition that what is true without

qualification can only be incompletely articulated or partially intimated at lesser levels. It

can be embodied, but only imperfectly. Stenzel has described how “just as in the strict

sense there cannot be an appearance of the Good, so in the end there cannot be opinion

about it; the true Good can never become an object of opinion because it is an

unconditional final end". 61

Magister Bruce Ware of the Temple of Set has succinctly summarized Plato's "Pyramid of

Thought" thus:

In his quest to define a Philosopher-King, Plato must necessarily define wisdom, and it

is this effort of definition that generates the Platonic epistemology consisting of the

Forms, the four types of cognitive capabilities (also called the faculties, or in Greek

"*dynameis*") and their fields of objects.

For Plato the highest and most fundamental faculty was *noesis* (sapience); its field of

objects was of the Forms themselves. For humans *noesis* is "the capacity for

knowing" (Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, 1170a 16). "It is satisfactory to call science and

reasoning (*episteme* and *dianoia*), taken together, knowing (*noesis*)" (Plato, *Republic*

533e).

Noesis is the full exercise of all the faculties of the reasoning mind. It comes intact

from the Greek, where it means "thought", based on the verb *noein* (to think). The Latin

equivalent may be "*cogito*" or "*sapientia*". Note that this word usually is translated as

"intelligence", but I have determined that the word "sapience" is closer to what the

various writers were referring, while “intelligence” seems to have become a rather vague

term in recent years.

Dianoia (thinking) is the second faculty, reasoning, especially practical thought; the

Latin equivalent is “*ratio*” (meaning something closer to “calculation”). Its field of objects

is the human mind’s capability of generating conceptual definitions of the Forms. Plato:

“The converse of the soul with itself, without speech, is what we called thought (*dianoia*).”

In the analogy of the Divided Line, Plato explains the difference between *noesis* and

dianoia:

61 Iyer, Raghavan, *Parapolitics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, pages #43-46.

But you want to distinguish that part of the real and intelligible which is studied

by the science (*episteme*) of dialectic as having greater clarity than that studied by

what are called “sciences” (*technai*). These *technai* treat their assumptions as first

principles and - though compelled to use *dianoia* and not sense-perception in

surveying their subject matter, because they proceed in their investigations from

assumptions and not to a first principle - they do not exercise *noesis* on (those

technai), even though with the aid of first principles they are intelligible. And I

think that you call the habit of mind of geometers and the like "*dianoia*" but not

"*nœsis*", meaning by "*dianoia*" something midway between *doxa* (accepted

opinion) and *nœsis*. (Plato: *Republic*, VII, 6, 511c-d).

Pistis (belief) and *eikasia* (conjecture = a conclusion arrived at from evidence that has

grounds for reasonable belief) have for their fields of objects the individual and particular

instances which manifest the Forms, and imitations or reflections (paintings or sculptures

for example) of instances manifesting the Forms, respectively. It is very important to note

and remember that these two *dynameis* are considered by Plato to be cognitive activities,

activities of the mind, of the philosopher, particularly in this time when ideas surrounding

"faith" (implied in "belief" and "conjecture") are derided as non-rational.

Plato describes a process through which one becomes capable of *nœsis*: first one

begins by contemplating the physical manifestation of the Form Beauty: a beautiful body.

Then through dialectical discussion and the full activation and use ("*energia*") of all the

faculties, the Philosopher-King candidates finally learn to apprehend the Form of Beauty

itself. This is a process, a way of knowing or a way of thinking. Each faculty has its own

way of knowing, or process of thinking, and thus generates its own way of behavior. 62

Hence the challenge facing a new initiate is not simply the absorbing and accumulation of

new information, but **an entirely new way of approaching that information** - indeed the

awareness and selection from among several new modes of addressing it.

5. Ouspensky's "Psychology of Possible Consciousness Evolution"

In 1934 Peter D. Ouspensky, that brilliant student of Gurdjieff, referred to this same

initiatory process as "the psychology of man's possible evolution" and summarized it in a series

of five lectures. He began with perhaps the most irritating [to the noninitiated] question: Why

cannot all people become authentic initiates? Why only the Elect few?

His answer, blunt in its simplicity: **Because most people don't want it.** They don't want

it because it is incomprehensible to them from the outset, it doesn't promise anything of

material/tangible value, and finally it is frankly frightening. Ordinary people prefer their

thoughts, like their physical lives, to be comfortable, reassuring, predictable, and peaceful. They

do not want to venture into any kind of "unknown darkness".

Unsurprisingly, and as needs little exemplification here, they also view with mistrust,

suspicion, and occasionally outright alarm and hatred those who **do** so venture.

Ouspensky divided human consciousness into four "states", which he called **sleep**, **waking**

sleep, **self-consciousness**, and **objective consciousness**:

Sleep is the purely passive and automatic state in which the human body functions [whether

biologically awake or asleep] without any mental awareness or effort. In ordinary humans this is

62 Ware, Bruce, *A Survey of Platonic Epistemology*. Temple of Set, 2004.

routinely interrupted and augmented by *waking sleep*, what most people are when they consider

themselves “awake and conscious”. Comments Ouspensky:

It is necessary to understand here that the first state of consciousness, that is, *sleep*,

does **not** disappear when the second state arrives, that is when man awakes. *Sleep*

remains there, with all its dreams and impressions. Only a more critical attitude towards

one’s own impressions, more connected thoughts, more disciplined actions become added

to it.

Because of the vividness of sense impressions, desires, and feelings - particularly the

feeling of contradiction or impossibility, which is entirely absent in sleep - dreams become

invisible exactly as the stars and Moon become invisible in the glare of the Sun. But they

are all there, and they often influence all our thoughts, feelings, and actions - sometimes

even more than the actual perceptions of the moment ...

The second state is less subjective. Man already distinguishes “I” and “not I” in the

sense of his body vs. objects different from his body. And he can to a certain extent

orientate among them and know their position and qualities.

But it **cannot** be said that man is “awake” in this state, because he is very strongly

influenced by dreams and **really lives more in dreams than in fact**. All the

absurdities and all the contradictions of people, and of human life in general, become

explained when we realize **that people live in sleep, do everything in sleep, and**

do not know that they are asleep. 63

To this point Ouspensky’s “unawakened man” does not advance past Plato’s *eikasia*, since his

“waking sleep” is merely a more sensory-aware state of responsive behavior.

What happens when Ouspensky’s man “awakes” [through an initiatory school], however, is in

somewhat different focus than that of Plato. Plato’s *dianoia* is characterized by rational

reasoning concerning all phenomena, but Ouspensky first requires man to develop a coherent

realization of **himself**. Only then can he reliably turn his new vision outward towards the

objective universe:

These two states, *sleep* and *waking sleep*, are the only two states of consciousness in

which man lives. Besides them there are two states of consciousness possible for man, but

they become accessible to a man only after a hard and prolonged struggle.

These two higher states of consciousness are called *self-consciousness* and *objective*

consciousness.

We generally think that we possess self-consciousness - that we are conscious of

ourselves, or in any case that we can be conscious of ourselves, at any moment we wish.

But in truth “self-consciousness” is a state which we ascribe to ourselves without any

right. “Objective consciousness” is a state about which we know nothing.

Self-consciousness is a state in which man becomes objective towards himself, and

objective consciousness is a state in which he comes into contact with the real, or

objective, world from which he is now shut off by the senses, dreams, and subjective

states of consciousness ...

Another definition of the four states of consciousness can be made from the point of

view of the possible cognition of truth.

63 Ouspensky, Peter, *The Psychology of Man’s Possible Evolution*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950, pages #32-33.

In the first state of consciousness, *sleep*, we cannot know anything of the truth. Even if

some real perceptions or feelings come to us, they become mixed with dreams, and in the

state of *sleep* we cannot distinguish between dreams and reality.

In the second state of consciousness, *waking sleep*, we can only know

relative truth,

and from this comes the term *relative consciousness*.

In the third state of consciousness, *self-consciousness*, we can know the full truth

about ourselves.

In the fourth state of consciousness, *objective consciousness*, we are supposed to be

able to know the full truth about everything; we can study “things in themselves”, “the

world as it is”.

This is so far from us that we cannot even think about it in the right way, and we must

try to understand that even glimpses of *objective consciousness* can only come in the fully

developed state of *self-consciousness*.

In the state of *sleep* we can have glimpses of relative consciousness. In the state of

relative consciousness we can have glimpses of *self-consciousness*. But if we want to have

more prolonged periods of *self-consciousness* and not merely glimpses, we must

understand that they cannot come by themselves, they need **will action**. This means that

frequency and duration of moments of *self-consciousness* depend on the

command one has over oneself. So it means that **consciousness and will are**

almost one and the same thing, or in any case aspects of the same thing. 64

M. MindStar and Body Interaction

The general key which the Temple of Set applies to this problem is what Eric Hoffer refers

to as “the unnaturalness of human nature”. The MindStar or self does not behave as though it

were merely a “sum total” of the brain’s sensory and manipulative capacities, combining and

recombining inputted information as though it were an “organic” electronic computer. It has a

sense of identity, a sense of uniqueness, a sense of distance and differentiation from everything

else that exists. It has characteristics which are something more than instinctive and something

less than logical; these are called “emotions”.

Most significantly, perhaps, are the creative MindStar’s thought prerogatives and

dispositions. We don’t just think to survive or to react to external stimuli, B.F. Skinner

notwithstanding. We think creatively, spontaneously, abstractly, and æsthetically. We conceive,

design, and construct non-natural concepts, arguments, processes, and objects. And we can

distinguish between the natural and the non-natural - something that would be a logical

impossibility if the consciousness itself could not extend beyond the natural.

To demonstrate this capacity to yourself, consider something as simple as a Möbius strip.

Your consciousness rebels at a phenomenon which it perceives as “against the law”. As a matter

of fact, the various Möbius phenomena are not “against the law”; there is an entire field of

mathematics - topology - which is concerned with the properties of geometric configurations

subjected to various transformations. But here it is not the phenomenon itself but rather your

reaction to it which is significant. The revulsion you feel is a manifestation of something in you

which possesses the **power** to view the order of the OU from **outside**.

The philosopher Immanuel Kant approached this power of the MindStar from a somewhat

different angle. He referred to it as humanity's ability to **assign meaning** to natural

phenomena - to recognize, appreciate, define, categorize, rank, and otherwise determine the

importance, relevance, and significance of an event or object in nature. "Objects of experience,"

64 *Ibid.*, pages #35-36.

he said, "are never given in themselves, but only in **experience**, and have no existence outside

it."

Arthur Schopenhauer went a step further, holding that the individual will is the source of

causality itself, of which space, substance and time are mere derivations.

Friedrich Nietzsche discussed the power in terms of the higher intellect's ability to **build**

horizons for itself beyond mere recombinations of the known. Plato defined this suprarational

quality of the mind as *nœsis* and held that it was capable of perceiving the eternal, transcendent

principles of all existence beyond even the most rigorous reasoning (*dianoia*): the **Forms** or

First Principles.

This power of the soul is thus both **apprehensive** [reaching beyond the limits of the OU]

and **creative** [enabling one to generate meaning, to initiate existence]. This creative aspect may

be called the **Subjective Universe** (**SU**) to distinguish it from the OU.

The SU and the OU contain mutually-incompatible elements of definition, but they also

blend into one another. For example, we use the SU to assign meaning to the OU, and we

regularly rely upon our knowledge of phenomena in the OU to give us "building blocks" to

construct objects in the SU. [Many "fantasy creatures", for example, can be broken down into

"parts" of natural animals.]

The ability of any intellect to generate and operate the SU is not automatic [beyond the level

of ordinary imagination]. It must be deliberately learned and exercised. The experience of such

perspective and power can be exhilarating and stimulating; more often - to those unprepared for

the sensation and psychologically unable to accept it - it has been frightening.

Man does not like the idea that he doesn't fit wholly and completely into the natural scheme

of things. Hence he has sought an ally in a personalized "God" that created him as a wholly

natural pet project [for example, pre-"fallen" man in the Garden of Eden]. He has invented

religious and social codes that give him a sense of conforming to the natural order of the OU. He

has built cathedrals and monuments to reassure and reinforce this sense, and he has even had

his dead body buried with rites commemorating his inclusion in it. These very acts, ironically,

expose his secret dread that his conscious self - his MindStar - does **not** belong to it. When that

part of him which **does** belong to it - his physical brain and body - separates from his

consciousness and remains purely a component of the OU [through physical death], he fears that

his consciousness, unlike his physical shell, will not obey the [OU] law of conservation of matter

and energy. Rather it will cease to exist.

While fearing the death of his self-consciousness, ironically, man has also sought to punish

it for its existence. He has mythologized it as devils or, in Western Judæo/Christianity, the Devil.

He has tried to drive it out of his mind through psychological coercion as well as through

physical punishment ranging from simple fasting to the tortures of the Inquisition. And of course

he has tried to pretend that it is really not there at all - that any activity by the MindStar which is

not harmonious with the OU is simply disease: madness and mental illness.

Nonetheless the soul endures. It has survived all efforts to destroy, distort, disguise, or

sublimate it - for none of these efforts has ever actually succeeded in touching it. At most they

have succeeded in damaging only the physical medium for its expression.

N. Immortality of the MindStar

Perhaps the most important contribution of the original Church of Satan (1966-1975CE)

was its focus upon and glorification of the soul or *psyche*, even though its original ambition was

to downplay that concept in favor of mere fleshly gratification.

As we Satanists explored the implications of Anton LaVey's initial, dramatic statements in

the *Satanic Bible*, it gradually became evident that any focus upon oneself presupposes the

separateness of that self from everything else. Flesh is found to consist of natural substances,

and most of our lower-level thought processes - what Plato would class as *pistis* and *eikasia* - are

similarly found to be little more than conditioned responses to external stimuli. As the Satanist

continued his search for the "thing that was exclusively himself", he was forced to increasingly

more complex introspection, resulting ultimately in a philosophical and metaphysical crisis that

would only be resolved in the more precise philosophy of the Temple of Set.

In the Temple the *psyche* became the acknowledged focus of the Setian's initiatory quest.

The logical mind and the fleshly body were not disdained, but seen rather as interpretative and

communicative devices both between the *psyche* and its existence in the OU, and between

various *psyches* (i.e. between individual Initiates). Subsequently this led the initiated *psyche* to

confront the implications of an existence which is radically distinct from the OU. The existence

of the *psyche* as something **not** the product of natural forces - created and energized by Set -

necessitates comprehension of its future beyond finite interface with the natural/material.

Historically the issue of the *psyche* has been gradually oversimplified into a “this-life-

only” (TLO) vs. a “life-after-death” (LAD) debate. As the debate has raged throughout many ages

and mythologies, these two alternatives have tended to become mutually exclusive.

The TLO proponents have passionately denied that anything of “this life” can continue past

the destruction of the fleshly shell, even though they have no **positive** proof of the simultaneous

extermination of the *psyche*. Since they can no longer detect its presence through their own

fleshly interfaces with the OU (the five senses), they **presume** that it no longer exists. When

challenged on this over-extension of logic, they retort that the burden of proof is on the

challenger ... to prove that a posthumous *psyche* exists by establishing a material/5-sensory

channel of communication with it.

Most publicized efforts to do exactly that have been predictably ludicrous at best and

fraudulent at worst: seances, reincarnation fantasies, and “ascended master” rubbish.

Materialists have felt secure in ridiculing such antics, and one cannot entirely blame them for

claiming that their own position has thus been validated by default. But by strict scientific and

logical criteria it has not.

At the other extreme are the LAD advocates. They have faced the interesting problem of

trying to make a convincing and attractive case for something whose existence they cannot

demonstrate to any of the five OU senses. Rather than address that challenge directly [as the

Temple of Set does], they take the easy way out and sell their product by attacking the TLO

competition. They portray “this life” as merely a test of obedience, on which the individual will

be judged at the point of transition into LAD - which they hold to be far more important because

it is eternal.

Since uninitiated humans fear the unknown and prefer to be safe rather than sorry, the

LAD merchants have been able to use fear and threats as effective propaganda devices. Although

they are in effect “selling a totally undetectable and unverifiable product” for the greatest price

the customer can conceivably pay (a lifelong abstinence from various pleasures) they have been

generally successful - as is attested to by the unbroken grip of LAD religions, from Osirianism to

Christianity, on the bulk of humanity throughout its recorded history.

1. Jewish and Christian Afterlifes

Within the Western cultural tradition it is rarely realized that its two major religions -

Christianity and Judaism - are actually at extremes apart on this issue. Christianity in all of its

many forms upholds LAD as reason for abstinence in “this life”. Judaism, on the other hand,

insists upon TLO and absolutely rejects justification for human behavior on any grounds other

than YHVH’s direct instructions to living humans. Comments Arthur Schopenhauer in *Parega*

#I, 13:

The Jewish religion proper, as described and taught in Genesis and all the historic books until

the end of Chronicles, is the crudest of all religions because it is the only one which has no theory

of immortality - not even a trace of it. Every king and every hero or prophet is buried, when he

dies, with his fathers, and there is an end of the matter; no trace of any existence after death;

indeed, as if intentionally, every thought of this sort seems to have been removed.

Schopenhauer is only partially correct. The ancient Hebrews drew no distinction between

human souls and the animating force common to all animals (*nephesh*). Although some part of

this animating force was thought to survive the destruction of the body, it was regarded with

superstitious terror and referred to ambiguously by the terms *elohim* and *rephaim*. By the 2nd

century BCE Hebrew doctrine had changed to include the

revivification of the material body, but

Hebrew theologians never extended this principle to the Pythagorean/ Platonic concept of an

independently-surviving *psyche*.

Not surprisingly the original Christians continued this Jewish tradition of corporeal

revivification, using the Greek term *psyche* to mean much the same thing as the Hebrew

nephesh. In Matthew 10:28, where the soul is mentioned as distinct from the body, their

posthumous reunion is promptly suggested. The most conclusive example of this doctrine, of

course, is that of Jesus' own material resurrection [as in Luke 24:36-43], but by the time of Paul

the distaste with which sophisticated Greeks regarded this "animation of corpses" (*anastasis*

nekron) induced that apostle to modify Christian teachings in the direction of Pythagoreanism.

Paul was further aware of - and presumably sought to overcome - the challenge of Gnostic and

Hermetic Christianity, being a blend of basic Christianity with various Egyptian and Hellenic

mysteries. 65

In I Cor. 15:35 and II Cor. 5:1-2 Paul offers a mixture of Pythagorean and Hebrew ideas,

whereby the posthumous soul is given a "spiritual body" (*soma pneumatikon*) which

nevertheless requires a bodily form. Despite Paul's efforts, Christianity has never succeeded in

breaking free from the notion of reanimation of the original corpse, which at least has been grist

for the mill of horror-film producers.

While there have been many explanations for Christian antipathy towards Judaism, one of

the most crucial had todo with Jews' failure to be posthumously accountable in any way for their

incarnate conduct, implying that they are self-serving and indifferent to ethics. Observed

Dietrich Eckart, initiate of the *Thule Gesellschaft* and mentor to Adolf Hitler and Alfred

Rosenberg, in 1919 (*Auf gut deutsch*):

It is now evident that a people which completely denies the existence of life after death must

limit all of its thoughts and endeavors to the present world, to earthly existence; it has no other

choice. But a people can only grow up with such an emphasis on worldly matters if it

fundamentally lacks any need for immortality, which in turn is possible only if there is no trace of

feeling in its basic character for the eternal in mankind. Wherever the soul manifests itself, no

matter how faintly, a sense of immortality necessarily follows. The individual is not always

consciously aware of this; indeed there are many who refuse to understand it - who are so

ignorant concerning the concept of immortality that they habitually denounce it, even while their

unselfish actions clearly reveal that each one of them senses the soul and therefore eternity within

himself.

65 The 1945 discovery of thirteen original Gnostic codices at Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt has shed much light on

the ideas with which Paul had to compete. The codices themselves date to 350-400 CE but are probably copies of

2nd century CE originals.

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Although Pauline Christianity attempted to appropriate the Pythagorean/Platonic concept of

the “soul distinct within and ultimately freed from the body”, it was unable to sustain this

concept without the vehicle of the body. Christian artistic representations of posthumous

Paradise are invariably sterile and dull. It will be recalled that Christ’s ultimate promise upon his

Second Coming was to reunite all souls with their ex-bodies, so that they would once again enjoy

their original corporeal shells.

2. Beyond Judæo-Christianity

The Christian concept of “Satan”, being as it was a crude scarecrow of everything

Christianity didn’t like, was thus as “confused in reverse” as Christianity itself was. This is clearly

evident in Anton LaVey’s *Satanic Bible*, wherein Satan is said to stand for indulgence in fleshly

life and rejection of posthumous judgment. As Anton plagiarized from Ragnar Redbeard’s *Might*

is Right:

Life is the great indulgence - death the great abstinence. Therefore make the most of life -

here and now! There is no Heaven of glory bright and no Hell where sinners roast. Here and

now is our day of torment! Here and now is our day of joy!

Viewed in this context, the Church of Satan's initial Satanism was, in effect, Judaism with a

YHVH who would let you do anything you wanted rather than one who was a vengeful sadist. Yet

both systems - the nice (Satanic) one and the vicious (Jewish) one - came to a screeching halt at

the grave. [Anton explained the many *memento mori* decorations of his home as reminders of

death's being just around the corner, hence of the need for Satanists to get as much out of

incarnate life as possible.]

Elsewhere in the *Satanic Bible*, however, Anton made a statement which, while largely

overlooked during the Church of Satan's span of existence, is one of the more crucial in his entire

philosophy:

If a person has been vital throughout his life and has fought to the end for his earthly

existence, it is this ego which will refuse to die, even after the expiration of the flesh which

housed it ... It is this vitality that will allow the Satanist to peek through the curtain of

darkness and death and remain earthbound.

Here Anton's concept of life was still the TLO one common to Judaism and his original

Satanism. In wishing to live rather than die, he could conceptualize immortality only in terms of

an **extension** of TLO through force of will. He likened it to the refusal of a child to go to bed

when there is something exciting going on; in this sense it was a denial that there could be any

kind of life for the *psyche* other than “earthbound life”. To “go to bed” is not to move into

another mode of existence, but simply to cease to exist. Anton’s original Satanism thus combined

a “friendly YHVH” (Satan) with the promise of endless material existence for the *psyche* -

providing that the *psyche* could project the strength and coherence of will necessary for that

existence.

As discussed at length in my *Church of Satan* history, Anton LaVey and the Church of Satan

were never able to resolve the dilemma of Satan’s actual existence: Was he real or just symbolic?

If he were real, it would seem to open the door to the entire **Christian** concept of the universe.

If on the other hand he were merely symbolic, then he didn’t really exist as a self-conscious,

willful force which could actualize Satanists’ ritual-magical desires or which could even care

about the existence of the Church of Satan. In that case magic would be reduced to mere stage-

trickery, and the Church itself would be nothing more than a club for spooky psychodrama.

The Temple of Set resolved this dilemma in 1975 CE by asserting the actual existence of

“Satan” (as Set - the original, pre-Judæo/Christian entity) while at the same time removing the

concept of his existence entirely from the Judæo/Christian tug-of-war.

The essence of the *psyche*, stated Set in the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*, is such that its

existence is neither dependent upon the material nor imprisoned in it for testing or task-

fulfilling purposes. Rather the physical body provides a vehicle in which the *psyche* can **become**

aware of itself and then reach out towards the limitlessness of its conscious

existence. [It is this process which the Temple defines by the hieroglyphic term *Xeper*.] "This

life" may be likened to a springboard or launching-pad towards the *psyche*'s ultimate Self-

awareness and state of Being.

As for Set, he neither cracks a whip over humans in TLO nor sits in judgment over them in

LAD. Rather he is understood as the source of the **potential** for *Xeper* in each human animal.

Whether or not each individual recognizes this potential and takes steps to develop it (what **we**

mean by "initiation") is not Set's prerogative, else **his** own *psyche* would simply displace the one

within each self-aware human.

Such illuminated awareness is eloquently articulated in *Her-Bak* as one of the central

secrets of the ancient Egyptian Priesthoods:

What is life? It is a form of the divine presence. It is the power, immanent in created

things, to change themselves by successive destructions of form until the spirit or activating

force of the original life-stream is freed. This power resides in the very nature of things.

Successive destruction of forms, metamorphoses, by the divine fire with rebirth of forms new

and living is an expression of consciousness. It is the spiritual aim of all human life to attain a

state of consciousness that is independent of bodily circumstance.

What I have just said concerns the living spirit bestowed on the man already quickened,

like every living thing, by a rudimentary soul, which makes of such a man a creature superior

to the animal-human kingdom. He who recognizes the divine meaning of life knows that

knowledge has but one aim, which is to achieve the successive stages that liberate him from

the perishable. For things die only in their body; the spirit, the divine Word, returns to its

source and dies not. Unhappy is the *Ka* that fails to recover its soul. 66

Such an explanation generally represents the perspective of the OU priesthoods, which

sought to interpret and explain humanity within that envelope. They were forced to

conceptualize incarnate humanity as a temporary particularization of the general OU, each such

human uncomfortably aware of this tension and striving to eliminate it through re-absorption

into the OU. While this Sage suggests that this is done by successive, progressively-more-refined

incarnations (a general premise of reincarnationism), there is little in original Egyptian

metaphysics to support this. 67

Had Her-Bak's initiation been into the Priesthood of Set rather than that of Isis, he would

presumably have been answered much in the vein of this book; but that would have necessitated

a far different exposure to the OU reality surrounding him than he received. Repeatedly and

remorselessly his complete separateness would have been dramatized to him, removing the

reassuring and relaxing prospect of both incarnate and disincarnate OU-inclusion.

66 Schwaller de Lubicz, Isha, *Her-Bak: Egyptian Initiate*. New York: Inner Traditions, 1967, page #35.

67 In *Secrets of the Great Pyramid* Peter Tompkins has suggested that a crucial rationale of Egyptian

mummification was precisely to **prevent** further terrestrial reincarnation. Permanent preservation of the body gave

the more material emanations the anchor they needed until the multifaceted MindStar could fully integrate itself in

a completely independent environment.

Thus Setian initiation exposes and incites a crisis in the initiate which initiation through the

other, natural *neteru* avoids. This crisis is definitive and exhilarating to the Setian mentality, but

can be devastating to one of the other *neteru*. As starkly summarized by H.P. Lovecraft:

Life is a hideous thing, and from the background behind what we know of it peer dæmoniacal

hints of truth which make it sometimes a thousandfold more hideous. Science, already oppressive

with its shocking revelations, will perhaps be the ultimate exterminator of our human species -- if

separate species we be -- for its reserve of unguessed horrors could never be borne by mortal

brains if loosed upon the world. 68

As we have seen, conventional visions of post-incarnate immortality tend to the OU-totality

model, fumbling between either immediate OU-reabsorption or some sequence of progressive or

karma-varying terrestrial reincarnation. In the absence of a non-natural *telos*, humanity is

forced into either free-will or deterministic OU-Mechanism. Envisioning immortality within

such constraints leads to only one result: dissolution of the self, the independent consciousness.

To the OU-initiate this is indeed expected and even anticipated, often with the assumption

that one's personality will not in fact be extinguished, but rather melded into that of the

collective gods/God. Such an outcome would indeed relieve the tension and exclusiveness of

separateness; it is less comprehensible how it would permit any vestige of the previously-

individual life-being to continue.

In his book *Life After Death*, the eminent philosopher Maurice Maeterlinck addressed his

perceived reliance upon bodily definition of self:

I care not if the loftiest, the freest, the fairest portions of my mind be eternally living and

radiant in the supreme gladness; they are no longer mine; I do not know them. Death has cut the

network of nerves or memories that connected them with I know not what centers wherein lies the

point which I feel to be my very self. They are thus set loose, floating in space and time; and their

fate is as alien to me as that of the most distant stars.

Yet Maeterlinck is not so certain that the physical body's materials and mechanisms are the

whole story. He senses that the entirety of himself is more than the sum of such tangible physical

parts, and indeed may be completely apart and distinct from them, using them only as an OU-

interactive device. He continues:

All that befalls has no existence for me unless I can recall it within that mysterious being

which is I know not where and precisely nowhere and which I turn like a mirror about this world

whose phenomena take shape only insofar as they are reflected in it. [69]

Maeterlinck used the term "*ego*" [in a non-Freudian sense] to refer to this individual identity

somewhere/somehow beyond the purely physical, in which he defined "mind" as physically-

driven brain functioning:

This *ego*, as we conceive it when we reflect upon the consequences of its destruction - this *ego*,

therefore, is neither our mind nor our body, since we recognize that both are waves that roll by

and are incessantly renewed. Is it an immovable point, which could not be form or substance, for

these are always in evolution, nor yet life, which is the cause or effect of form and substance?

In truth it is impossible for us either to apprehend or define it, or even to say where it dwells.

When we try to go back to its last source, we find little more than a succession of memories, a

mass of ideas, confused, for that matter, and unsettled, all connected

with the same instinct, the

68 Lovecraft, H.P., “Arthur Jermyn” in *Dagon and Other Macabre Tales*. Sauk City: Arkham House, 1965, page #47.

69 Maeterlinck, Maurice, *Our Eternity*. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1914, pages #50-51.

instinct of living: a mass of habits of our sensibility and of conscious or unconscious reactions

against the surrounding phenomena.

When all is said, the most steadfast point of that nebula is our memory, which seems, on the

other hand, to be a somewhat external, a somewhat accessory faculty and, in any case, one of the

frailest faculties of our brain, one of those which disappear the most promptly at the least

disturbance of our health. As an English poet has very truly said, “That which cries aloud for

eternity is the very part of me that will perish.” 70

Maeterlinck was, however, falling into - or, rather, setting for himself - the same logical trap

that imprisons contemporary Mechanists: that memory is completely a product and construct of

OU interactions through the physical senses. Eliminating them eliminates it.

Implicit in this limitation is the assumption that OU-based, and presumably buttressed,

memory is the only “real” memory. Anything else is merely imaginative, and as such must be

kept carefully and strictly segregated from the “real”. If the two are confused, or worse yet

deliberately dignified with the same reality, the individual is “insane”.

The same holds true for time-assignments of memory events. If one remembers an event, it

may or may not be consciously or subconsciously dated. Remembering your date from your high

school prom associates that OU date with the memory creation. But remembering something not

so inherently fixed in time, such as a favorite location visited repeatedly over years, does not

carry a specific date. You may store enough short-term memory to be certain you haven’t seen it

within the last year or so, but that is merely external-exclusionary.

Also there is no reliable division in terms of precision between short-term and long-term

memory. It’s effortless to remember the multiplication table you learned in the third grade.

Yesterday’s credit-card charge at the supermarket? Not unless you gave it special “retentive”

attention at the time.

All of which is to say that memory is neither objective nor reliable, and that there is no

certain mechanism to ensure or correct either problem.

With Maeterlinck’s trust in memory-as-self undercut, the individual is reduced to

instantaneous sensation of separateness to establish conscious identity. This is René Descartes’

cogito ergo sum at its most fundamental. It is not thinking “of something”, whether real or

imaginary, that establishes individual consciousness; it is the exercise of thinking itself. 71

But confirming that one exists is only the smile of the Cheshire Cat. What distinguishes and

differentiates you from innumerable other separate consciousnesses? Again the Mechanist's

habit is to default to his OU body. "I am what exists within and uses this machine." Nevertheless,

as we have already seen, this is not at all a unitary relationship. Parts of the body can be

inactivated or removed without affecting the wholeness of consciousness, and during sleep or

anesthesia the consciousness disconnects from all of the body's physical-sense interfaces.

We are left with an "essential self" which we thought we knew through a mixture of reliable

memories and constantly-reinforcing body sensations. We now realize that both are

fragmentary, imperfect, unreliable illusions. This wisdom survived the destruction of ancient

Khem as the Pythagorean/Platonic doctrine of transmigration of the *psyche* as evidenced by

anamnesis:

70 *Ibid.*, pages #48-49.

71 Rejecting the "disincarnate origin" of thinking as establishment of personal existence and identity, Martin

Heidegger proposed that self-perception requires external displacement: "being there" (*Dasein*) in order to

subsequently conceive itself through a composite of "what it isn't" reflections. This may console those unnerved by

Descartes, but ultimately does not refute him. Something with the innate capacity to perceive must preexist any

external input.

SOCRATES: Those who tell it are priests and priestess of the sort who make it their

business to be able to account for the functions which they perform. Pindar speaks of it too,

and many another of the poets who are divinely inspired. What they say is this - see whether

you think they are speaking the truth. They say that the soul of man is immortal. At one time it

comes to an end - that which is called death - and at another is born again, but is never finally

exterminated. On these grounds a man must live all his days as righteously as possible. For

those from whom

Persephone receives acquittal for ancient doom,

In the ninth year she restores again

Their souls to the Sun above.

From whom rise noble kings

And the swift in strength, greatest in wisdom,

And for the rest of time

They are called heroes and sanctified by men.

Thus the soul, since it is immortal and has been born many times, and has seen all things

both here and in the other world, has learned everything that is. So we need not be surprised if

it can recall the knowledge of virtue or anything else which, as we see, it once possessed. All

nature is akin, and the soul has learned everything, so that when a man has recalled a single

piece of knowledge - “learned” it, in ordinary language - there is no reason why he should not

find out the rest, if he keeps a stout heart and does not grow weary of the search, for seeking

and learning are in fact nothing but recollection.

- Plato, *The Meno*

When most people think about “immortality”, they imagine a simple continuation of their

immediate, conscious perceptions and impressions. That is, the moment-to-moment

“reinforcements” that we all experience daily, and which - by being “not ourselves” -

continuously form a kind of propping-up wall enclosing (hence “defining”) that amorphous

feeling we are accustomed to calling “ourself”.

It is this “self” that most people fear to lose in the event of bodily death. They simply don’t

know how else they could know themselves to **exist**. Take away the reinforcing “hits” from the

OU, and the “amorphous feeling” evaporates into nothingness, they fear, like going under a

general anesthetic (which also, but temporarily, “removes all hits”).

The Initiate, however, is challenged to first recognize, then differentiate, then identify his

immortal consciousness with those parts of the eightfold soul which are never connected to the

physical body’s functions, hence are not affected by its death or disintegration.

This is accomplished through **reflective, non-reactive thinking**. Thus the individual

becomes aware of his authentic self (soul); and upon activating this as the locus of his

consciousness, looks outward at phenomena **at the same depth**. In other words, the superficial

"self" looks out at its level and sees OU events - like bodily pleasure/ pain, blue sky, ringing

telephones, time defined by clocks and calendars, and so forth. The core or true self, however,

exists as a *neter* and, when looking outward, sees a SU not of the works of other *neteru*, but of

those *neteru* themselves. One "machine" sees other "machinery"; one "creator/operator" sees

other "creator/operators".

The Egyptians might describe such inward, reflective thinking as the accessing of the *ba* or

core-soul by the *khat* or body-soul: the Platonic phenomenon of *anamnesis* as the *khat*, which

normally exists and defines itself in an environment of bodily dimensions and sensations, not

only reaches beyond that environment but in some situations depends upon the *ba* for a more

accurate source of truth. To "deny one's senses" is a familiar experience for most people in

certain situations, though they may not realize what such a gesture actually entails in terms of

mental coherence. When done, it is almost always brief and minimal, because the *khat*'s reliance

upon bodily senses for its information and both definition and continuous reinforcement of

"reality" is so strong and ingrained. Unless the *khat-ba* connection is

both a conscious and a

strong one, the individual may interpret such an experience as mere loss of coherence, or

“insanity”.

Immortality of the self **is**. Your ability to align your consciousness with your *neter*, rather

than your superficial, animal, illusion of “self” is *Xeper*.

These ancient initiatory keys to immortality were energetically attacked and suppressed by

Christianity, as that cruel religion correctly perceived that fear of death was one of the most

powerful weapons it could use to enslave humanity. It was important that death be taught as

something hideous and final, from which the only escape was surrender to Christ - by which, of

course, Christian churches really meant their institutions. Those areas of non-Christian Europe

which had escaped, at least for a time, domination by this numbing propaganda, continued to

preserve the truth. In *For Freedom Destined* Dr. Franz Winkler observes:

In ancient times the secrets of man’s true nature, and of the forces that determine his fate,

were contemplated in the great temple universities of paganism all over the civilized world.

Though men were fully aware of the important role that heredity plays in the shaping of the

physiological and psychological organism of a human being, they did not think that the

innermost core of the human being was the product of purely biological forces. This innermost

core, called by the Greeks the *entelechy* or *dæmon* of man, was credited with qualities unique

to the individual, apart from the characteristics of the body he inhabited. The concept of

entelechy corresponded roughly with the Judæo-Christian concept of an immortal soul.

Most pagan creeds held that the human *entelechy* neither begins nor ends with life on

Earth. Man's 'mortality' referred merely to the fact that his self-awareness ceased with the

death of his body. The immortal gods differed from mortal man by the continuation of their

consciousness. Since ancient ideas on the mystery of birth cannot be separated from pagan

philosophies about the soul's supersensible existence, certain concepts generally accepted in

the pre-Christian era should be mentioned. According to pagan theology, consciousness after

death could reach one of three levels. The first level was the one allotted to the average man:

dreamlike, with almost complete absence of memory and self-identification, called *Hades* in

Greek, *Hel* in Germanic mythology. The second was accessible to the true hero, the man whose

deeds of courage and creativeness distinguished him from ordinary mortals. The Greeks called

this state of consciousness the *Elysian Fields*, the Germans *Walhalla*. The third level was

reached by those who could soar beyond the narrow limits of Earth-bound consciousness and

thus bring new impulses into the world. Already while they still lived in a mortal body, their

awareness had assumed divine status. Their souls after death, in the language of mythology,

were lifted to the stars. 72

Is attainment of the immortality of the *Ba* or *psyche* a technique which the individual has to

"learn"? Must one hurry to do so, lest one's body expire before the trick is mastered? Quite the

contrary, as the sage in *Her-Bak* emphasized, this immortality is **innate in all conscious**

beings. You have it **already**, by evidence of that same consciousness which enables you to read

and comprehend these words. It is nothing which the Temple of Set "confers" on you; rather it is

something which conventional churches have tried to trick you out of, and which materialistic

science has denied simply because it is an aspect of existence which **transcends** science [hence

is not subject to "scientific proof"]. Further from Winkler:

Life's appearance as "meaningless" stems basically from man's materialistic concept of

himself. If his innermost nature were merely biological, complete fulfillment of his appetites

and the acquiring of wealth would satisfy his longing for happiness. Since they do not, an

72 Winkler, Franz E., *For Freedom Destined: Mysteries of Man's Evolution in the Mythology of Wager's Ring*

Operas and Parsifal. Garden City, NY: Waldorf Press, 1974, pages #54-5.

atmosphere of hopelessness is enveloping our generation, especially our youth. In an affluent

society where all material ways out of such frustration have been found wanting, drugs,

perversions, and the thrills of crime are now being used as desperate means of escape from the

intolerable boredom. Well-meaning efforts on the part of the authorities to stem the tidal wave

of juvenile delinquency and drug-addiction will therefore bring scant results, until the

following simple truth has been fully accepted by parents and teachers:

Happiness, love, and compassion are spiritual faculties that during centuries of neglect

and misunderstanding have withered and grown weak. Unless they are nursed back to health,

man will despair of life and eventually throw it away in a mass suicide by nuclear destruction.

But how can we care for what we no longer comprehend? Modern science, admirable in its

achievements on a material plane, has proven ineffectual in the understanding of intangible

values. This limitation, while freely admitted by the small number of truly creative scientists,

seems to elude the average intellectual. And the failure to recognize this limitation adds to the

delusion that natural science in its present form can be the judge of religious or spiritual truth.

Making modern man’s plight even more serious is the fact that his materialistic delusion of

himself not only deprives him of wisdom and happiness, but acts also as a pattern in whose

dreary image he tends to reshape his nature. Consequently more and more personalities

emerge who think and act virtually like robots. They know no happiness and have no

perception of objective morality.

We have grown wise in the analysis of the material world, have expanded the scope of our

perception to outer space and to the world beneath the atom. But objective inner experience

has faded almost entirely away, and it has left us groping in the dark for the true image of

ourselves. 73

It is the function of the Temple of Set, as of the ancient Egyptian priesthoods, the

Pythagorean Brotherhood, and the Platonic Academy before it, to inspire its Initiates to awaken

to that knowledge which is latent within their consciousness and needs only to be appreciated as

such. Winkler rightly points out that, the more highly initiated one becomes, the more one can

experience such prerogatives of *Xeper*. But this is a matter of perspective and proportion, not of

the quality of immortality itself.

It is all too easy to perceive “life” as only the active functioning of one’s material, OU-

constituted body. Such an attitude fosters a disease of the *psyche* far worse than any of the body.

It numbs you to that immortality which is inherent in the Gift of Set, and it makes you the prey

of everyone who, in the profane world, seeks to control your life by threats against your body.

O. The Prince of Darkness

So the non-natural MindStar - the personalized, subjective “reflection” of the “Devil” - has

proven its existence many times over, and in a variety of contexts and semblances. But what of

the **Form** behind **all** such particularized manifestations - a creative source or **First Principle**

of whose essence all non-natural souls partake? What of an actual, uniquely-existing “Devil”?

During its 1966-1975 CE existence, the Church of Satan regarded its own mythology with a

mixture of emotional fervor and intellectual uncertainty. The Church came into existence not as

the result of a philosophically-deduced need, but rather as a spontaneous gesture of exasperation

with and contempt for the hollowness and hypocrisy of conventional social and religious

morality. The Church was thus a “statement” - a glove thrown down - not of that morality *per se*,

but rather of humanity’s impudence in announcing goals and standards for itself which it had

neither capacity for nor intention of attaining. Satan, as the accuser and rebel, was the inevitable

symbol for this statement.

73 *Ibid.*, pages #19-21.

Having rejected conventional options, however, the Church found itself in the position of

having to construct an alternative approach to morality. The result was an imprecise blend of

personal hedonism with a rather cynical, Hobbesian attitude towards the rest of society. Those

able to achieve self-indulgent lifestyles - Satanists - should do so without qualms; ordinary

people should be coldly exploited as befits their unimaginative and conservative behavior- and

thought-patterns. [Cf. Aristotle's doctrine of "natural slavery".]

As for Satan himself, the Church began by making much of the sinister glamor of the Devil,

both in its early rituals and in media coverage. In the *Satanic Bible* Anton LaVey proposed a

simple identification of the Devil with any and all forms of pleasurable indulgence. Together with

a lampooning and debunking of conventional religious dogma, this identification constitutes the

principal theme of that volume's "Book of Satan (authored by Ragnar Redbeard)" and "Book of

Lucifer (authored by LaVey)".

But then the *Satanic Bible* becomes oddly vague. Satan himself is never really defined, save

as an allegory, semantic term, and/or symbol of the subjective, creative self. On page #62 it is

said that "most Satanists [think that Satan] merely represents a force of nature - the powers of

darkness". It is then implied that these "powers of darkness" are simply natural forces which

neither religion nor science has yet identified or attempted to employ. The *Satanic Bible*

advocates using them for Indulgence - and that is where the discussion of Satan stops. The

reader is then thrown somewhat off the track, because the phraseology of the rituals that follow

recasts the Devil into one or more of his traditional, anthropomorphic

molds.

The paradox of conventional Satanism was that the Devil was understood to be a force of

nature, thus being derived from and ultimately dependent upon "God" in some way. He may

make a lot of noise, but in the final analysis he is part of the same all-inclusive machinery of the

Universe/God; even his "rebellion" is part of God's Universal scheme. Satanists, accordingly,

might be able to play a good game - but ultimately the deck is stacked against them. They cannot

win.

The Church of Satan avoided this paradox by the simple technique of procrastinating

confronting it. An atmosphere of psychodramatic atheism prevailed. Satan was ceremonially

invoked with great fervor, but in non-ceremonial surroundings even the most diehard Satanists

hesitated to take a position concerning his reality. If references to his existence were made, they

were vague, cautious, and hypothetical.

This attitude prevailed throughout all levels and branches of the Church. Even Anton

LaVey, when speaking of the Devil, was wont to employ such euphemisms as "the Man

Downstairs", or to speak more cryptically of "forces", "vibrations", "angles", and "atmospheres".

In addition to the "stacked deck" paradox, there was a second motive for this reluctance to

grapple with the issue of the Devil's existence: the unspoken acknowledgment that atheism is

ultimately untenable. Throughout the OU there exists rigid adherence to principles of physical

and natural behavior; we may call this “order” or “consistency”. It is because of this consistency

that we can predict events in the physical, chemical, biological, and mathematical sciences.

Scientists term such predictive patterns “laws”.

[There is a school of philosophy called **subjective** or **voluntaristic idealism**, in which

an effort is made to define nature as merely a creation of the mind, an objectification of the will

(Fichte, Schopenhauer), but the subjective idealists have not been able to **prove** that the OU is

in fact a mental construct - for precisely the same reasons that they can challenge the

assumption that it does not enjoy objective existence apart from perception. Like their

predecessor Descartes, they are ultimately forced to the assumption that one must accept the

evidence of the senses as reliable and to some extent impersonal.]

Recalling Thomas Aquinas’ failure to demonstrate the existence of God through logic, and

the consequent relapse of Christianity into a faith-based system, rational minds of the

Enlightenment era approached this “ordering” of the OU in two significant ways:

First there is **pantheism** (sometimes called **monistic idealism**), whose most noted

advocate was the Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677). According to pantheism, God

and the universe are one and the same substance; everything that exists or occurs is an aspect of

God. Being neither separate from nor independent of the universe, God has no personal

qualities. [It should not be supposed that Spinoza meant this as an "attack" on God after the

fashion of Nietzsche. Spinoza's recommended attitude for human beings was what he termed the

"intellectual love of God" through a generalized appreciation of nature.]

The perception of an "enforced" system of order or consistency throughout the entire OU,

however, led some philosophers to induce the necessary existence of something external and

superior to that universe. Conceptually the OU cannot "regulate" or "order" itself. Hence another

school of thought - **deism** - arose, its most noted proponent being Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz

(1646-1716) of Leipzig. Deists differed from pantheists by postulating a superior and

independent God, but one who, after creating the OU and its laws, refrains from tampering with

them. Hence such a God never intervenes in human affairs or fortunes, whether or not he is

interested in them.

The Church of Satan adopted an essentially deistic attitude towards cosmology: "God"

probably exists, but since he doesn't involve himself in human affairs, there is no reason to court

his approval. Opening the door to the existence of "God", however, opens the same door to the

existence of another intelligent entity apart from the OU. The Devil can thus exist in theory. Is

there any evidence that he does in actuality?

The Enlightenment philosophers assumed mankind to be compatible with, hence included

in the order of the OU. Human behavior was just another kind of science to be explored and

mastered. [It is no accident that the Enlightenment saw the birth of "social contract" theories of

government, based on speculations about the "natural ordering" of human society.] But, while

social contract approaches to government and politics have enjoyed some measure of success in

the subsequent centuries, they have by no means demonstrated their inclusion of individual

creative power and the force of will. At the close of the 20th century, most of the great social

contract experiments, if they have survived at all, have mutated into a kind of technological

Machiavellianism in which **individual** drive, leadership, and fortune determine the shape of the

present and the direction of the future.

We confront, therefore, a scenario in which the OU is increasingly exposed as a consistent,

interrelated machine - and in which the human intellect is increasingly exposed as something

which has defied all attempts to relegate it to a function of this machine. Mankind displays a

potential for intellectual external-perspective and willful creation that is in sharp contrast to

everything else that is known concerning this OU.

Consider the vast intellectual gap between mankind and every other species on the planet.

One has only to walk into a major library to sense the extent of this gap. Much is made about the

relatively high intelligence of chimpanzees, dolphins, etc.; yet the most intelligent of their

number cannot remotely compare with even the most primitive examples of *homo sapiens*.

Moreover, say physiologists, even the most exalted levels of human intelligence and knowledge

have been attained with only 10-20% of the reasoning potential of the human cerebrum. How

and why did humanity acquire this freakishly high intelligence potential?

While anthropologists can chart the **stages** of prehistoric human evolution to the limits of

available data, they remain unable to explain **why** the entire phenomenon should have occurred

at all. The best they can do, in textbook after textbook, is to say that "man developed high

intelligence because he needed it to survive". According to this theory, proto-men were lacking in

speed, strength, fighting teeth & claws, and other physical attributes necessary for survival.

Mutants with greater intelligence tended to survive through cunning, sustaining their

descendants, while less-intelligent groups died out. This process, repeated over some five million

years, resulted in *homo sapiens*, the prototype of Cro-Magnon, Neanderthal, and Modern Man.

The escape clause in this theory is the time factor: Five million years is plenty of time for

almost anything to evolve into almost anything else. Besides, the anthropologist will say, the

entire primate development process can be traced to origins some **fifty** millions of years ago.

Hence the condition of Modern Man isn't as startling as it would be had it happened "overnight".

All well and good, but there are at least two problems with this proposition. One is that

proto-man was just one of **many** animal species fighting for survival over the millennia. If his

brain could evolve through processes of natural selection, then why did the brains of other

creatures not similarly evolve - at least a **little**? The fact is that the brains of other creatures have

remained practically the same size while man's has "evolved". This is **inconsistent**, and it will

be recalled that the hallmark of the OU - and deistic proof of God - is its **consistency**. By the

law of averages - which applies to natural selection as much as to anything else - there should

have been at least **some** species other than man evolving in intelligence at least partway to the

human level. There is none.

The second problem arises through application of one of the bastion theories of Darwinian

natural selection. It is that nature always takes the easiest way out - that selection favors the less-

complicated adaptation over a more complex alternative. When a time of famine favors species

able to reach higher for herbal food, longer-necked giraffes survive. We do not see short-necked

giraffes with wings. A more-or-less easy physical modification must first **accidentally occur** in

a species; thereafter selection takes place against those who do **not** possess the characteristic.

That is the way evolution actually works.

But there is **no** explanation for human brain evolution in the laws of natural selection. The

biophysical factors of a sophisticated brain are far too intricate. A proto-man trying to adapt to

hostile environments through brain modification would have died out long before such external

stress as he could bring to bear on his brain would have any effect upon that organ [if indeed

they would have any physiological effect at all]. In the case of proto-man, natural selection would

occur in favor of almost anything else **besides** the brain. He would become stronger, hairier,

tougher, meaner, and faster. According to natural selection, you and I should be gorillas.

But we are not gorillas. Indeed, as our intelligence has made life progressively easier for us,

we have become weaker and more vulnerable physically. We are healthier and more long-lived

only because our intelligence has enabled us to produce medicines to stave off diseases, and

dietary standards to maximize our health and growth potential. We have controlled

environments to fend off the elements, and have developed weapons to fend off other creatures.

Take away our abnormal intelligence and mankind would die out or be killed off within a few

generations. Because of our brain, then, the natural evolution of the rest of our body [which

would normally operate in favor of an **unaided** tougher, more disease-free physiology] has

actually operated in **reverse**. Once more this is **inconsistent**.

There is a corollary to the second problem. It is that natural selection, when it does occur,

does not overcompensate. If conditions allow all giraffes with four-foot necks to survive, there is

no reason for the species to evolve in the direction of forty-foot necks. **If** the human brain were

presumed to be the product of natural selection, why should it possess intelligence greater than

that required to raise man to stone-age culture? More than than, why should it possess the

capacity to be ten times smarter than it is **today**?

If human high intelligence is a violation of OU law, how did it occur? There are two possible

explanations: accident or deliberate cause. If **accidental cause** is assumed, then the accident

would have had to be both a major violation of the law and one which sustained itself over

several millennia. And if there were one such accident, the laws of probability would necessitate

others in lesser degrees [and greater numbers]. In all of the many manifestations of life and

evolution with which we are familiar, we know of **no** other such accidents. Natural law's grip on

everything else besides ourselves appears total and inescapable. We are left with the second

explanation: **deliberate cause**.

During the Age of Satan (1966-1975 CE) a certain "racial memory" of some prehistoric

change to the natural course of human evolution seemed to be asserting itself. 74 The most

spectacular and explicit example was the film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, Arthur C. Clarke's

variation on the theme of his earlier novel *Childhood's End*. In *2001* proto-man's intelligence

was artificially boosted by a rectangular monolith. In *Childhood's End* the same operation was

performed by an extraterrestrial creature looking precisely like the traditional Devil. Presumably

the spectacle of a tribe of man-apes thronging around Satan would have been a bit too shocking

for audiences; hence the substitution of the more abstract monolith in the film. Intriguingly the

monolithic Satan-symbol provoked no adverse criticism from viewers, religious or otherwise.

Once the religious myths are removed, the "fall" of man is seen as his **rise**.

Such a *2001*-style tinkering with human intellectual evolution would have had to occur at

the genetic level, and presumably [so as to be sustained by normal reproduction] over an

extended period of time. So we are looking at a subtle process, not a sudden, dramatic event [as

in Adam & Eve's apple-munching or Prometheus' fire-giving]. We do not have sufficient

knowledge of genetics or of the brain's physiology to know precisely how such tinkering might

have taken place - though we can estimate it. 75 That it did in fact take place is indicated only -

but inescapably - by the presence of the *fait accompli*.

The "ancient astronaut" theories of van Däniken et al. may be dispensed with peremptorily.

The human body displays an organic constitution completely compatible with those of other

Earthly species, and alien astronauts could not have taught anything to a proto-man whose

intelligence had not **already** developed to a high level.

There are a great many genuine curiosities of antiquity which suggest that mankind's

advanced intelligence made its presence known long before the recorded civilizations of Egypt,

Sumer, China, etc. But, despite torturous efforts to interpret toys or Meso-American murals as

"spaceships", evidence of alien astronauts on Earth remains conspicuous for its absence.

Mankind's inability to detect the author of our "high intelligence experiment" should not be

considered as evidence that he does not exist, but simply that he has not been discovered and

identified. Nor, one may add, has mankind been actively looking for him. Instead it has been off

first on the wild-goose chase of religious-creationism, then on the wild-goose chase of natural

selection [as applied to the brain]. Nevertheless he exists; the conclusive evidence exists. To

quote Walt Kelly's Pogo: "Us is it."

To sum up: We know that there is evidence for the existence of an intelligent entity distinct

from the OU and thus in incidental, if not deliberate conflict with its laws. For whatever its

reasons, it has instilled in humanity the potential to enjoy the same external perspective, as well

as the intelligence to do so with deliberate, creative purpose. Some humans sense this potential

and thrill to it; we call them the Elect. Most others do not think precisely and rigorously enough

to detect it in themselves; or, if they do, they fear it and try to sublimate, repress, or destroy it.

Hence they have represented our Mysterious Stranger as the Devil. We know him by his most

ancient name of Set.

The Temple of Set is thus an association of the Elect to honor Set, exalt his Gift to ourselves,

and exercise it with the greatest possible wisdom. As Set is a metaphysical entity, apart from the

74 See Appendix #95.

75 See Appendix #96.

OU, he may be likened to a “god” as conventional society employs the term. In this sense the

Temple of Set **is** a religion - not one which is based on irrational faith, but one which derives its

core principles from exercise of the evident and conspicuous Gift of its *neter*.

P. Historical OU/SU Interpretations

The cosmological premise of the Temple of Set is that there is one

multiverse, consisting

of the totality of existence. Within it are the **OU** [whose components occupy space and are

related by time] and each sentient being's **SU**. The SU may be thought of [at least during one's

OU-bodily incarnation] as one's personal perspective on the OU, together with any self-created

phenomena one wishes to add to it.

In the "exclusive" OU, a house is simply a geometrically-coordinated, gravitationally-braced

and weatherproof arrangement of certain kinds of molecules. As various individuals design,

decorate, occupy, or view the house, however, it is imbued with characteristics assigned to it by

them [cf. Kant in "The *Psyche*"]. It now exists in their several SUs, and it may continue to exist

there even after the OU house has been demolished.

As various people discuss the house, moreover, their SU concepts concerning it will be

exchanged. Thus SUs may themselves overlap. This is another way of defining "intellectual

affinity", and it is also a precondition for affection and love.

It is open to question whether an individual can detect the existence of the OU at all, save

through the "distorting medium" of his SU. Rene Descartes' famous statement "I think; therefore

I exist" was the result of his attempt to batter through his SU to secure evidence of the OU's

reality [and his existence within it]. The Irish philosopher George Berkeley disputed Descartes,

claiming that the OU does not exist - that such reliable data as we have concerning it are merely

agreements or similarities between our several SUs. The creator and "enforcer" of these

similarities, Berkeley continued, is the divine mind (i.e. a God or gods).

Berkeley's philosophy is called **immaterialism**. It was followed by two offshoots:

solipsism and **subjective idealism**. Solipsism disputes the existence of a divine mind, and

indeed of any other individual minds. To the solipsist, the universe consists of "nothing but

myself and my ideas". The physical world, including the human beings populating it, are simply

figments of one's imagination. [If one should be "attacked" by such a figment, the sensation of

the fight and the bruises resulting from it would be viewed by the solipsist as unpleasant

fantasies of his mind originating, beyond his conscious control, in its subconscious depths.]

Subjective idealism, whose most prominent proponent was the German philosopher

Johann Gottlieb Fichte, was an approach to immaterialism that seemed to be "less absurd" than

solipsism. Fichte began by acknowledging that neither materialism (the existence of nothing but

the OU) nor immaterialism (the existence of nothing but the SU) can be established. A

philosopher must arbitrarily accept either one or the other as a point of departure, then

construct his theories from that platform.

Fichte opted for immaterialism. He felt that he existed, per Descartes' maxim. But, unlike

Descartes, he didn't trust in God to subsequently impart to him reliable sensory impressions of

an OU. He postulated the original existence of a mental essence divided into the **ego** (the

sensation of the self) and the **non-ego** (sensations of things not perceived as the self). This

mental essence is more impersonal than the subconsciousness of the solipsist. The essence is a

sort of "supermind" which transcends all particular ego and non-ego manifestations.

As noted above, Fichte chose the premise of immaterialism and from it developed the

philosophy of subjective idealism. His successor, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, chose the

premise of materialism and from it developed the philosophy of **objective idealism**. In its

simplest form, this philosophy imparts reality to the OU, making all SUs simply aspects of it.

Hegel's OU, however, is not a physical substance. Rather it is an all-embracing, absolute mind

which is racing through its many ideas to reconcile them, refine them, and ultimately realize

itself through them. This is the "evolution" of the universe, and is what Hegel referred to as the

historical "dialectic" of thesis/ antithesis > synthesis.

Endless debates rage concerning these and other metaphysical theories. This is not the

place to attempt to resolve them. They are introduced in elemental

form simply in order to

illustrate the role that the concepts of the SU and OU play in them. They are “building blocks”:

points of reference.

Using these building blocks, the individual may conceive of himself as a self-conscious,

intelligent entity who confronts the OU and SU from a point of external perspective. [Whether

this external perspective extends to the SU is problematic; this is like asking the mind whether it

can get outside itself! But for our purposes an external perspective on the OU, together with a

realization of the SU, will suffice.] The challenge of existence is thus how to approach both

universes intelligently and rewardingly.

There are two essential approaches to each universe, which may be termed **natural** and

non-natural. 76 Hence a total of four possible approaches: (1) natural/OU, (2) non-natural/OU,

(3) natural/SU, and (4) non-natural/SU. Each will now be discussed in turn.

Q. Personal OU/SU Perspectives

1. The Natural Approach to the Objective Universe

The natural approach to the OU is to endeavor to blend in with it, to harmonize with it, to

become one with it. In one mythological context or another, this is the goal of all conventional

religions, which view man’s estrangement from the OU as something “out of adjustment” at best

and “sinful” at worst. A fundamental paradox is involved, however,

which makes such a goal of

reunification impossible. The paradox is that the very **desire** to attain union with the OU

evidences the individual's essential **separateness** from that universe. It follows that **any**

conscious act relative to that universe - even one which seeks to approach it - is an exercise of

that separateness. Hence to be **aware** of one's disconnection from that universe is to **remain**

disconnected from it.

Jesus Christ is reputed to have said that, to enter Heaven, one must be "as a little child". To

put it another way, such a person would have to radiate an innocent, selfless passion for the

harmony of the Universe; he would be unable to conceive himself as apart from it.

The irony of Christ's admonition is that **neither innocence nor selflessness are**

products of the conscious intellect. Hence he was stating a truth about which those

listening to him could do nothing, whether or not they understood or agreed with him. One

cannot "decide to be innocent" or "resolve to be selfless". One can conduct one's life **as though**

one were innocent and selfless, of course - and be a nice person who does nice things for others

in the process. But beneath all appearances, all affectations, the **actual** state of the soul remains

as it is: either animal/natural or human/enlightened, either asleep and ignorant or awake and all

too aware.

It is nothing short of horrifying to review the record of man's efforts to "get at" the state of

the human soul. He has cruelly tortured the body and the mind, even destroyed life itself in

efforts to suppress or exterminate the "Satanic" state of self-awareness and pride in personal

existence. He has concocted innumerable religions and substitute-religions purporting to be able

to snuff out this flame; these have used every conceivable combination of drugs, incense,

76 See Appendix #97.

pageantry, recitation, ritual, and even Thomistic-style "logic" whose conclusions are safely

predetermined by faith-derived axioms.

All such devices are ultimately of no avail. At most they confuse, distort, and lull - but in the

end "are all spirits, and are melted into air". They are false, useless, meaningless, and tragic -

tragic in the sense of the ancient Greek dramas: futile efforts of an Œdipus struggling

pathetically to evade what the gods had decided **must be**.

Such efforts to deceive the consciousness into believing that it has been accepted into the

OU are defined by the Temple of Set as **White Magic** (WM). It will be noted that this definition

is far broader and less value-laden than pop-occultists' use of the term. WM embraces not only

all conventional religions, but all pagan or nature-worship ideologies as well. To the Temple, the

only distinction between them is one of style and imagery, not of underlying purpose.

Atheists and logical positivists attempt to create the illusion of man's inclusion in the OU

simply by refusing to admit to the possibility of any alternative. Such individuals brusquely deny

that anything worthwhile exists in the SU, which they consider useful only for fantasy and

escapism. Such natural/objectivists thus include Machiavelli, Hobbes, Hume, and Marx, as well

as the Sophists of Hellenic Greece and the later Stoics of the Hellenistic and Roman eras of

Mediterranean culture.

When confronted with metaphysical issues, natural/objectivists profess annoyance at such

"useless" speculation. They pride themselves on practicality, on common sense, and on material

interests. If they are involved in religion at all, it is only as a means for social or political

influence, as in Rousseau's contemptuously-advocated "civil religion" - or in order to "scratch

the itch" [with as little intellectual bother as possible] of the sublimated feeling that there just

might be something more to the universe than their bourgeois materialism.

2. The Non-Natural Approach to the Objective Universe

If one assumes that one is an independent entity moving about in the OU, and that one

cannot merge one's consciousness with it - that all attempts to do so are mere illusions and

delusions - then one approaches the OU as a tool to be used for

personal satisfaction. Natural/

objective religionists are regarded as irrational, and natural/ objective atheists are regarded as

ignorant.

The non-natural/objectivist makes a careful study of the OU from his self-realized external

perspective, and he includes in that study consideration for the subjective, metaphysical forces

that influence human disposition and behavior (i.e. others' SUs). He then applies his knowledge

to entities and events in the OU and through this medium to others' SUs, to control or at least

influence events and perceptions in accordance with his will. This is defined by the Temple of Set

as **Lesser Black Magic** (**LBM**). 77

It will be understood that competence in this art gives the practitioner enormous power to

affect situations in ways that could scarcely be understood by those involved, even if they were

aware of the various forces being brought to bear on them. It thus follows that rigorous

education in ethics is an absolute necessity for would-be Black Magicians - else through

ignorance, immaturity, or impulsiveness they bring about unjustified or even unnecessary

damage or destruction. As has been noted, the OU is in a state of **natural equilibrium**, and

any adjustment to it risks disrupting that equilibrium. Some adjustments are tolerable, and some

are even beneficial. But some which seem positive at first glance may be harmful in a larger

77 For a detailed study of LBM techniques and how they may be applied to the reduction, if not complete elimination

of human warfare, see Michael A Aquino, *MindWar* (2016).

perspective, as in the extermination of “harmful” mountain lions which ultimately results in

overpopulation and mass starvation of their natural prey.

The adept practitioner of LBM is thus not a crude predator; he is an adjustor, a

manipulator, a metaphysician. He does not practice his art for petty egotism, but rather for the

greater satisfaction he derives in the experience and exercise of his wisdom - which as a by-

product invariably satisfies whatever material goals he may deem appropriate to the situation.

A second non-natural approach to the OU is actually a simplified, directed application of

Greater Black Magic (GBM) [see discussion below] towards the solving of problems or

adjustment of situations in the OU. This special application, bridging the gap between GBM and

LBM, is called Medial Black Magic (MBM). It is discussed in Chapter #21.

3. The Natural Approach to the Subjective Universe

The atheistic natural/objectivist, as stated above, regards subjective impressions as unreal

and unimportant save as escapist entertainment. This is the realm of science-fiction and fantasy

writers, of escapist movies, of commercially-driven artists and musicians. Their litany - an

invariable identifier - is that their work has no usefulness apart from the emotional pleasure it

brings and such allegorical references as it makes to “realities” in the OU. The occasional writer,

artist, philosopher, or musician who refuses to disclaim the more “disturbing” aspects of his

work as mere entertainment - as in the case of Wagner, Crowley, von Stroheim, Nietzsche - is

liable to be dismissed as an eccentric at best or condemned as a madman at worst. **Profane**

society fears few things more than recognized genius which is not directed towards

“safe, predetermined” goals.

The religious natural/objectivist, who creates subjective experiences for himself to reinforce

his sense of inclusion in the OU, accepts the reality of the SU only insofar as his sensations of it

provide that reinforcement. When these do not, they are labeled heresy, fantasy, or mental

disease. Once again the determining factor is the relevant religious dogma, against which all

subjective experiences are measured and evaluated.

The common factor in both natural/objectivist approaches to the SU is that it is rigidly

regarded as insubstantial, impotent, and unreal. It can thus be cynically endorsed and even cited

as authority when convenient [as the more successful conventional religions have done]; and it

can just as easily be ignored when inconvenient or unprofitable. It is a **plaything**. Except to the

extent that they have fallen victim to their own artificially-induced

delusions, religious leaders/

white magicians comfortably ignore their “gods” whenever it suits their purposes to do so. Or, if

in a position to “interpret” said gods, they do so with a calculated eye to their own comfort and

advantage.

It is one of the great oddities of human civilization that such transparent frauds attract any

adherents at all, much less worldwide followings. John Fowles has suggested that it results from

mankind’s psychological starvation for mystery. “If no one will write new detective stories,” he

observes in his *The Aristos*, “then people will still read the old ones.”

4. The Non-Natural Approach to the Subjective Universe

The individual with a basic non-natural (“Satanic”) sense of self-awareness need not

confront the SU directly. He may be content to use it symbolically, as a device for emphasizing

and formalizing his LBM goals. This was the approach of the vast majority of those who affiliated

with the Church of Satan from 1966 to 1975. Many of the Church’s most exotic - and seemingly

literal - rituals are thus correctly understood as LBM psychodramas. As such they could be

startlingly effective.

But what had begun as a somewhat tongue-in-cheek exercise in monster-movie theatrics

and social satire gradually evolved into an increasingly more focused search for the principles

behind such effectiveness. It was this search which culminated in the metamorphosis of the

Church of Satan into the Temple of Set in 1975 - minus those who were unable or unwilling to

see past the original psychodramatic concept.

The theory and practice of non-natural interaction with the SU is defined as **Greater**

Black Magic (**GBM**). It involves first the exploration of one's SU, other SUs which may be

involved, and relevant portions of the OU to their conceptual frontiers [if not limits]. There

follows a precise, coherent, and deliberate focusing of the will of the creative self to adjust

features of the SUs (personal and others') to the desired state, which may or may not be "real" in

the OU.

The concept of magic postulates that there is a continuous "linkage" - generally referred to

as the **Magical Link** (**ML**) - between the OU and SUs. Hence a change occurring in one will

have at least a partially similar effect in the other.

It is easy to explain why the OU should influence the SU, but explaining the reverse

influence is rather more subtle and complex. It is the active application of the ML conceptualized

by Fichte, through which application the concentrated energies of the **ego** create "patterns" in

the over-reaching mean essence, which patterns in turn create related, if not completely identical

"patterns" in the **non-ego** part of the mental essence - which is that which defines and binds

together the laws of consistency in the OU. [If you are intimidated by Fichte, go see the original

(now “Episode IV”) *Star Wars* film and you’ll get the general idea.]

GBM is difficult to conceptualize, difficult to master theoretically, and difficult to practice

reliably - but it **does** work. It may take effect in greater or lesser degree, but in any given case it

is virtually impossible to predict that degree.

The chances of success in a GBM working are presumably improved if one does not attempt

too great a “distortion” in the laws of consistency of the OU, and if one applies extraordinary

energy to the corresponding phenomena in the SU(s). One must also take advantage of every

cooperative force in the OU to enhance the working, using GBM to “tip the balance” rather than

do the whole job. Thus GBM is ideally supported by LBM, though the converse is not true. Anton

LaVey referred to the consideration of peripheral factors in support of a GBM working as the

balance factor in magic.

Recently the term “Medial Black Magic” (MBM) has been introduced to describe GBM

Workings of a very simple, directed design with the specific and exclusive purpose of influencing

the OU. These influences or effects in the OU then, either incidentally or by intent, impact other

SUs which experience the phenomena. [Cf. Chapter #21.]

It is in the process of making the preliminary exploration of the SU and OU that the Black

Magician begins to discover and ultimately to know **how things really work**. He exists wholly

in neither the SU [like a mystic] nor the OU [like a materialist]. He regards neither one as a toy,

nor denies it reality. He moves back and forth between the two with increasing ease and

expertise, influencing the MLs between them and thus **causing change in accordance with**

his will.

In the process he becomes wise, but because he considers both universes when giving

opinions, non-magicians may consider much of his wisdom as folly. It is not; it merely takes into

account more dimensions of a particular problem than onlookers are likely to see. A magician

who accumulates extraordinary wisdom of this "mixed" type is said to possess **Understanding**.

One is taught to become expert in natural approaches to the OU through conventional

education in the social and physical sciences, and in natural approaches to the SU through the

arts. The Church of Satan taught the theory and practice of LBM, and the Temple of Set adds to

that the theory and practice of GBM.

Just as education in natural approaches cannot guarantee that one will become competent

in applying that education, so education in non-natural approaches cannot guarantee that one

will become adept in their exercise. Many would-be magicians accumulate much "textbook

learning", yet prove unable to do anything with it. It may be because they don't try to apply it, or

because they don't have the talent for it, or because they don't have the intelligence to really

understand it. The Temple of Set, as is the case with other ethical, initiatory institutions in

history, teaches theory and Recognizes expertise in that theory. It cannot guarantee expertise in

practice.

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17: Initiation

A. Concept

Individuals who find their way to the Temple of Set are known as the **Elect**. This term has a

subtle significance of its own. It means “chosen” - but it does not identify the chooser. That

chooser may be Set; it may be oneself; it may be pure hazard. Nor does it imply privilege,

aristocracy, or guaranteed success. It is, simply, an acknowledgment that the aspirant stands at

these gates which only a comparative few have encountered. Like Parsifal, Jonathan Harker,

Her-Bak, or Nicholas Urfe, the aspirant either steps forward into the Temple - or turns back into

profane existence. 78

“Initiation” is the term used to describe the experience of an affiliate of the Temple of Set.

Since the term is very easily misunderstood and misused, its usage within and by the Temple

deserves careful explanation.

In its traditional sense, initiation is induction into the membership of a secret society,

hence being entitled to successively more exclusive secrets as the level of initiation rises. There is

usually a good deal of occult hot air mixed in with this, in that the candidate is exhorted

concerning the excellence he has had to display to be worthy of the honor, the sublime dignity of

the initiation itself, and the fearful consequences should he betray its secrets.

Many initiatory societies are little more than financial rackets, while others are more or less

sincere in what they are trying to do. Most esoteric knowledge

imparted under the guise of

initiation is not particularly practical. Rather it is vague, theatrical, mystical, and inconclusive:

obscurum per obscurius (“explaining the obscure by means of the more obscure”). The new

“initiate” is left with a pleasing feeling of heightened importance, yet is somehow unable to

explain why.

Authentic initiation is not simply the acquisition of specific knowledge or skills; it involves a

certain approach to the challenges of existence in general. An initiate, like a cat, must learn to

land on his feet in any situation in which he may find himself. He does this by the acquired and

applied technique of “stepping back to view the situation from outside himself”. He assigns

relative importance to it, estimates his options as an actor within it, and activates the most

appropriate such option. He may make mistakes due to lack of information, but he rarely errs on

the basis of what he does know. His developing sense of intuition, moreover, will warn him

78 There is an interesting metaphor of this principle in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*. After opening the door of his castle to

Jonathan Harker and welcoming him, Count Dracula becomes silent and motionless until Harker steps across the

threshold. Only then does Dracula become the gracious host.

whenever a situation is not whatever it immediately seems to be. He can then avoid premature

conclusions and impulsive actions.

The Temple of Set conceives the process of initiation as a Socratic refutation of confused,

imprecise, and unsubstantiated information and thinking. It is the imparting of truth as much as

we know it to be, but even more importantly it is the imparting of the ability to pursue truth and

to recognize it when it is found.

Wisdom - knowledge of truth - cannot be taught to stupid intellects. A love of and insistence

upon the truth cannot be taught to unethical individuals. Hence initiation is not something that

can be “done to” someone merely by subjecting him to a series of classes, examinations, and

ceremonies. All that the Temple can do - and all that it tries to do - is to spread out its banquet of

truths, probabilities, hypotheses, and speculations before aspirants whom we evaluate as

reasonably sincere. **They** must then utilize it, together with such other resources as they may

develop, to achieve wisdom. Thus do **they** initiate **themselves**.

By its membership and degree system, the Temple merely formalizes the demonstrated

levels of this achievement. This is why initiation within the Temple of Set is referred to as a

process of **Recognition**.

The term “degree” is used because initiation itself is a constantly ongoing and expanding

process. Hence one never attains initiation *per se*; rather one attains a particular “degree of”

initiation.

The parameters of each Setian degree also expand as the Temple as a whole increases in

wisdom and sophistication. This is in keeping with the principle of *Xeper* ("becoming"), which

identifies the process of constantly-expanding personal evolution. "Science **is** not; it is

becoming," wrote Mikhail Bakunin [in *God and the State*, 1882 CE]. "The learned man of today

is but the know-nothing of tomorrow. Let him once imagine that he has reached the end, and for

that very reason he sinks beneath even the babe just born."

Within the Temple one does not become party to the "secrets of a degree" by first being

appointed to that degree. Rather one, through his pursuit of wisdom and truth, gradually

acquires those "secrets" through his own efforts, within and without the research systems of the

Temple. If it is perceived that he has reached the level of wisdom and skill appropriate to a

higher degree, he is Recognized as being entitled to that degree.

There are no penalties for revealing "esoteric secrets" in the Temple. We exist to **promote**

knowledge of truth, not to conceal it. Setians should understand, however, that some of the

truths known to the Priesthood of Set can be dangerous to oneself or others if misapplied, just as

a loaded gun in the hands of a child is dangerous. Be careful what "guns" of your acquired

knowledge you place in the hands of profane "children".

B. Truth

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of the concept of **truth** to the *raison d'etre*

of the Temple of Set. In the last analysis the Temple is a tool to uncover truth, and a vehicle for

its promotion and application. Various historic initiatory systems have failed to the extent that

they have subordinated truth to anything else - impressiveness, wealth, power, luxury, laziness ...

the list of excuses, apologies, and rationalizations is endless.

The Temple agrees with Pythagoras and Plato that truth is an absolute **Form** or **first**

principle, which may be apprehended in specific instances through a combination of

intellectual effort and enlightened intuition. Rigorous examination of the intellectual process -

such as takes place in the Platonic *Dialogues* - is necessary to such apprehension. Thus it is

important to educate oneself in what is **known**, as well as to develop one's analytical and critical

abilities, before attempting to apprehend the **unknown**.

Intuition - the power or faculty of knowing things without conscious reasoning - is an

essential attribute of the initiate. Neither reasoning nor intuition alone will suffice; each must be

used in conjunction with the other. Intuition alone can easily become mere fantasy and

mysticism, while inductive reasoning can produce "logical" conclusions which are nevertheless

wrong.

Plato's concept of *nœsis* - the "capstone" of his "pyramid of thought", referred to a supreme

state of enlightened apprehension in which "the Truth" and "the Good" become

indistinguishable. Insofar as such a perception is unique and inevitable, it is also teleological,

constituting the *telos*, or ultimate end/purpose of the concept being investigated.

Friedrich Nietzsche felt, however, that where humanity is concerned, "truth" must be

judged in terms of its application. In his *Genealogy of Morals* he cautioned against the "ascetic

ideal": an interpretation of the Will to Power that is in fact a Will to Truth (*Wille zur Wahrheit*).

In a world of imperfections and duplicity, this ideal becomes a surrogate for the divine. Applied

to external God/gods it is indefinable; applied to oneself it becomes an ever-expanding, ever-

receding measure of initiatory perfection.

C. *Ekstasis*

To appreciate the initiatory significance of *ekstasis*, it is first necessary to understand what

it **is**, and that is most easily approached by what it is **not**.

What is common to all of Plato's "Pyramid of Thought" categories - *eikasia*, *pistis*, *dianoia*,

and *nœsis* is the processing of thought based upon sensory input and logical manipulation of

same. Even the capstone, *nœsis*, requires a *dianoic* substructure, refined by the most exacting

reduction of imperfections, to appear in truth. Hence, for example, the *nœsis* of the *Book of*

Coming Forth by Night required extensive analysis and substantiation following the North

Solstice X. That could not prove the working in its entirety, but it could significantly contribute

to the probability of that proof.

Ekstasis, on the other hand, is a psychic process which stands apart from the manipulation

of sensory information by reasoning. Because of this ethereality it is almost beyond defining per

our usual, logical language. The etymology of the term itself is illustrative: The original Greek

ekstasis means “astonishment” or “distraction”, which in late Latin became *extasis*, “terror”.

While we can only approximate what the ancients were trying to convey by such

expressions, it is apparent that they regarded *ekstasis* with caution. It was the ultimate

“uncharted territory” of conscious existence, the awareness of self-existence without reference to

anything external at all.

In Setian philosophy this is akin to **becoming** as Set himself, not merely adapting his

principles to our respective circumstances in the Objective Universe, or to our sensory-

referenced visions in our individual Subjective Universes. The ecstatic *psyche* generates and

sustains its own complete universe.

This is a [real!] Big Bang, to be sure, and it is unsurprising that profane society, and profane

philosophy, have shied away from confronting it directly. In common usage “ecstasy” is

cheapened into nothing more than an emotional rush, an “out-of-body experience”, or the kind

of self-annihilating trance symbolized by *nirvana* or religious rapture. Common to all these

interpretations is their dead-end: Persons so stunned become completely numb and neutralized.

They don’t know who they are, what their consciousness is, or what they can or should do with it

now. Perhaps the most classic illustration of this profane dilemma is the Star Child at the end of

Clarke’s/Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. He didn’t know what to do with himself, but, wrote

Clarke lamely, “he would think of something”.

For the Setian, however, attainment of *ekstasis* is the inevitable, ultimate consequence of

initiation. Hegel regarded all external phenomena, the flow of universal history, as “the mind of

God in the process of completely understanding itself”. Separately and severally we are not quite

so grandiose; we grant that we are **all** unfolding gods and goddesses. Our realization of *ekstasis*,

therefore, is not exclusionary: there remains “otherness”.

It is perhaps not surprising that artists and musicians flirt with *ekstasis* in their creative

explosions, a marvelous aspect of which is that we who look and listen can share their thrilling

“terror” with them. In the Order of the Trapezoid’s *Runes* I quoted Adolf Hitler:

Music and architecture - Is it not in these disciplines that we find recorded the path

of humanity's ascent? When I hear Wagner, it seems to me that I hear rhythms of a

bygone world. I imagine to myself that one day science will discover, in the waves set in

motion by the *Rheingold*, secret mutual relations connected with the order of the world.

The observation of the world perceived by the senses precedes the knowledge given by

exact science as well as by philosophy. It is insofar as percipient awareness approaches

truth that it has value. 79

Thus may we “preview” *ekstasis* in so many wonderful ways en route to its ultimate,

complete envelopment of our existence, which is **the** secret of what the profane ignorantly and

fearfully regard as “death”.

D. The Two Paths

The terms “Left-Hand Path” (LHP) and “Right-Hand Path” (RHP) are used in different and

often incompatible ways by various occultists. Reportedly the terms originated in Tantrism, a

school of Vajrayana Buddhism in northern India which taught that Buddhahood can be realized

through various theurgic practices. For *mantra* and *mudra* ceremonies the female was

positioned to the right of the male; for erotic rites she was positioned to the left. Theosophy’s

H.P. Blavatsky felt sex-magic to be immoral and perverse, so she subsequently employed the

term “LHP” to characterize the magical systems she didn’t like, and the term “RHP” to

characterize the ones she did, i.e. Theosophy. Post-Blavatsky the terms have been expanded

through popular usage to refer generally to what the Temple of Set defines as White Magic

(RHP) and Black Magic (LHP).

Most popular-occult organizations, to be sure, use the two terms simply to identify their

moral biases. What they consider “good” is RHP, and what they consider “evil” is LHP. After

Aleister Crowley left the Golden Dawn, he portrayed it as a “Black Lodge” and his own A.'.A.'. as

the “Great White Brotherhood”; while on the other side of the fence W.B. Yeats and other G.'.D.'.

leaders considered **Crowley** to be the Black Magician.

To further complicate the matter, there have been some deliberately criminal “Satanic”

organizations which have avowedly followed the LHP **as defined by those who consider it**

synonymous with degenerate and destructive practices. Such episodes have of course

served to reinforce the conventional religious image of Satanism and Black Magic as nefarious

practices.

So enduring was this stereotype that the Church of Satan found it very difficult to break free

from it during the entire decade of its existence. All sorts of creeps, crackpots, criminals, and

cranks pounded on the door of the Church, assuming that it would excuse and encourage

79 Hitler, Adolf, in H.R. Trevor-Roper (Ed.) *Hitler's Secret Conversations.* NY: Farrar, Straus & Young, 1953, page

#205.

whatever social shortcomings they embraced. The Temple of Set has generally avoided this

problem, mostly through careful admissions screening, but also because "Satan" is popularly

associated with "evil" while "Set" is largely unknown outside of Egyptological circles.

The Temple of Set's LHP orientation is, as noted above, a function of its definition of Black

Magic. No moral or ethical stances are implied by the terms LHP and RHP *per se*, since they

refer to **techniques** and **systems** rather than to the ends to which they are applied.

As defined within the Temple of Set:

• The **Left-Hand Path** (LHP) involves the conscious attempt to preserve and

strengthen one's isolate, psychecentric existence against the OU while creating,

apprehending, comprehending, and influencing a varying number of SUs.

• The **Right-Hand Path** (RHP) involves the intentional effort to dissolve or merge

the self into the OU.

To the Setian the LHP is neither "good" nor "evil"; it is merely an avenue towards

knowledge and power. While he may consider the RHP fruitless and/or deceptive, he likewise

forbears to pronounce moral judgments concerning it. Indeed, some of the Temple's most

valuable information comes from individuals and institutions who are/were thoroughly

convinced that they are/were treading the RHP.

Followers of the RHP are those whose stated goal is egocentric absorption into the OU

[which they confuse with the Universe as a whole]. They wish to harmonize their actions with it,

attune their intellects and emotions to what they consider the God of Universal Consciousness,

and thus partake of the immortality and divinity presumably characterizing that Consciousness.

This is the theoretical *nirvana* of the Buddhist, the Jainist, and the Hindu; the "salvation" of the

Christian.

The dilemma, of course, lies in the problem of "destroying" the ego and then continuing to

exist on Earth thinking, talking, writing, and acting as an obviously still-egocentric being who is

just as obviously **not** One with the OU. The classic example of this is once again Aleister

Crowley, who defined the grade of Magister Templi (8) = [3] to identify an initiate who had

successfully achieved this OU dissolution of consciousness, then went on to define the higher

grade of Magus (9) = [2] as characterizing a magician of sufficient will and power to force a

change in that same OU. This is a clearly impossible achievement if one is **already**

indistinguishable from that OU.

Hence it is a postulate of the Temple of Set that the attainment of Magister Templi (8) = [3]

is the end of the line for a true follower of the RHP. If he truly destroys his psychecentric

consciousness and attains *nirvana*, he becomes something akin to the prototypical Tibetan or

Christian monk - a simple, childlike, unemotional, unegotistical animal who no more thinks of

disturbing the OU than does an otter or a Sequoia redwood. He has, as it were, become the *Tao*.

Those who claim attainment to Magus display either (a) a fallback to a state of

psychecentrism, hence a lower RHP grade, or (b) their *de facto* adherence to the LHP. Since the

object of the LHP is to strengthen and exalt the psychecentric consciousness as something

distinct from the OU, the characteristic action of a Magus V° is indeed a mark of unique

initiatory success.

Similarly, a Magister Templi IV° of the LHP is one who gains total Understanding of the OU

from an **external**, **personal** point of perspective - and who complements this with a similarly-

total Understanding of his own SU.

Many self-proclaimed gurus of the RHP are not inclined to adopt simple, pastoral, self-

effacing, redwood-tree lifestyles. Rather they preen themselves by assuming regalia, offices, and

wealth dazzling to devotees, while insisting that such luxuries are their rightful due precisely

because they have set such a good example in no longer caring for them. If confronted with the

glaring hypocrisy of such positions, they retreat behind a smokescreen of religious mystery,

mystical ambiguity, and “initiatory” secrecy. If in positions of sufficient power, they persecute,

imprison, torture, and/or kill their critics.

The RHP societies which are of interest to the Temple are those which, whether accidentally

or deliberately, have broadened the knowledge-base of Black Magic. Almost every conventional

religion of serious historical consequence falls into this category, as each has worked out various

psychological approaches to the “human equation” to explain it, indoctrinate it, and/or control

it. The Setian is accordingly invited to approach the subject of comparative religious philosophy

as a most useful tool.

Certain religious or occult bodies took a more-or-less deliberate jump in the direction of

magic. Some of the more notable of these - professing the RHP - are discussed in Categories #4,

#9, and #10 of the Temple of Set Reading List (Appendix #12). You do not have to be an expert

on any of them to be a competent Black Magician, but you should know enough about their

particular fields of research to consult their histories, writings, and records as they may be useful

to your own interests and endeavors.

Does the Temple of Set view itself as being in competition with or in diametric opposition to

the RHP? No. We consider ourselves as magicians who have a clear understanding of what we

are doing, why it works, and where we would like to go with it. We assess the RHP as being at

best innocently confused and at worst hypocritically deceitful on all three counts. It is a

behavioral phenomenon of natural humanity. It is not dangerous because of its esoteric wisdom,

but rather because of its occasional, animalistic fits of exoteric unwisdom. The Black Magician

treats it as one does any other dangerous, primitive, emotional animal; he views it from a

distance, where he may learn from it and appreciate its beauty while remaining prudently out of

reach of its teeth and claws.

E. Initiatory Degrees of the Temple of Set

The Temple of Set defines initiation in terms of six formal degrees. They are: Setian I°,

Adept II°, Priest or Priestess of Set III°, Magister or Magistra Templi IV °, Magus or Maga V°,

and Ipsissimus or Ipsissima VI°.

This is not a simple progression for the “typical” Setian to use as a barometer of success.

While each degree has certain connections with the others - which accounts for their integration

into a single system - each degree is also a thing unto itself: a state of being highly distinct from

those above and below it. Hence a Priest III° is not simply “3/4 a Magister IV°”, nor can the IV°

be attained merely by becoming very good at the work of the III°.

Here the parable of the horse and the cart may be cited: One cannot fix on the “glamor” of

initiation - the formalized degree - as a goal and expect to get anywhere. Even if the trappings are

acquired through “ticket-punching” and the projection of an artificially-impressive image, both

the individual and the awarding agency will ultimately feel contempt for the farce in which they

have been participating.

Rather the individual must strive to awaken to, comprehend, and actualize all of the powers

latent within his intelligence and psychecentric being. As he accomplishes this, **true** initiation

takes place - whether or not it is formally recognized by an external agency. Because the Temple

of Set is composed of initiates who understand this principle, however, true initiation is

recognized and formalized by official designations on a Temple-wide basis. Hence the term

“Recognizing” of degrees rather than “awarding” or “conferring”.

F. Ancestry and Evolving Definition of the Grade > Degree Titles

The titular structure of the Temple of Set’s degree system dates back

to the Hermetic Order

of the Golden Dawn, a turn-of-the-century Cabalistic/Egyptian magical society that flourished in

Britain. 80 [See reading list category #10.] The grades (as they were then called) of the G.'.D.'.

were:

Grade

Sephirah Attribution

Neophyte (0) = [0]

[None]

Zelator (1) = [10]

Malkuth

Theoricus (2) = [9]

Yesod

Practicus (3) = [8]

Hod

Philosophus (4) = [7]

Netzach

Adeptus Minor (5) = [6]

Tiphareth

Adeptus Major (6) = [5]

Geburah

Adeptus Exemptus (7) = [4] Chesed

Magister Templi (8) = [3]

Binah

Magus (9) = [2]

Chokmah

Ipsissimus (10) = [1]

Kether

This elevenfold system was keyed to a Hebrew Cabalistic concept known as the “Tree of

Life”. According to the *Cabala*, the Universe and all of its contents derive from a manifestation of

God termed *Ain Soph Aour*, the Infinite or Limitless Light. Issuing from this source are ten

emanations or *Sephiroth*, being progressively coarser or more materialistic manifestations of

God. As the G.'.D.'. initiate ascends from one level of mental existence to another, then, he

supposedly is that much closer to the purely spiritual existence of God.

The G.'.D.'. grades of Zelator through Philosophus were concerned with an understanding

and mastery of the “elemental” forces governing the **physical** plane. The three Adeptus grades -

which collectively comprised the Second Order of the G.'.D.'. (the Order of the Red Rose and

Golden Cross) - raised the initiate to **spiritual** levels of apprehension. The grades of Magister

Templi through Ipsissimus were considered **Astral** grades beyond incarnated human

manifestation; hence none of the three G.'.D.'. leaders (Westcott, Mathers, Woodman) professed

a claim to them. As Dr. F.I. Regardie observed in *The Golden Dawn*:

It is impossible for the ordinary individual to understand those above the grade of Adeptus

Minor, and individuals who lay claim to such exalted grades, by that very act place a gigantic

question mark against the validity of their attainment. He that exalted is humble. And to have

tasted that which is conveyed by the Adeptus Minor grade is so lofty an experience that few in

their right minds, unless they were extremely saintlike in character, would consider

themselves as having passed officially to a higher spiritual state.

It is perhaps more to the point to say that the criteria for advancing even to the Second

Order were such a confusing and inconsistent mixture of Cabalism and Osirian Egyptian

mythology that any sort of objective evaluation of one's initiatory level became impossible.

Grade-promotion within the G.'.D.'. thus became largely a matter of politics and personal

80 Priest Leon Wild notes that the Golden Dawn's grade titles were adapted by one of its founders, Dr Wynn

Westcott, from the elder *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia* (founded by Robert Little in 1866), which in turn had

adapted them from the *Gold und Rosenkreuz*, a Prussian occult society (founded 1757?). Cf. Christopher McIntosh,

The Rose Cross and the Age of Reason: Eighteenth-Century Rosicrucianism in Central Europe and Its

Relationship to the Enlightenment. Brill Academic Publishers, 1997, ISBN: 9004095020.

favoritism, with the undergoing of initiatory rituals and the memorizing of corresponding

esoteric trivia being a secondary consideration.

After breaking with the G.'.D.'., Aleister Crowley determined to purify its grade system in

his *Astrum Argentum* ([Order of the] Silver Star). He described the A.'.A.'. system in an

appendix to *Magick* entitled “One Star in Sight”. It was a change from the G.'.D.'. concept only

insofar as it was redesigned to coincide with the concepts of initiation set forth in the *Book of the*

Law. Certain grade names were added or altered, and there was a general lessening of “pure”

Cabalistic emphasis:

The Order of the Star called S.S. is, in respect of its existence upon the Earth, an organized

body of men and women distinguished among their fellows by the qualities here enumerated.

They exist in their own Truth, which is both universal and unique. They move in accordance

with their own Wills, which are each unique yet coherent with the universal will.

They perceive (that is, understand, know, and feel) in love, which is both unique and

universal.

The order consists of eleven grades or degrees and is numbered as follows. These compose

3 groups: the Orders of the S.S., of the R.C., and of the G.D. respectively.

THE ORDER OF THE SILVER STAR

Ipsissimus (10) = [1]

Magus (9) = [2]

Magister Templi (8) = [3]

THE ORDER OF THE ROSY CROSS

(Babe of the Abyss - the link)

Adeptus Exemptus (7) = [4]

Adeptus Major (6) = [5]

Adeptus Minor (5) = [6]

THE ORDER OF THE GOLDEN DAWN

(Dominus Liminis - the link)

Philosophus (4) = [7]

Practicus (3) = [8]

Zelator (2) = [9]

Neophyte (1) = [10]

Probationer (0) = [0]

(These figures have special meanings to the initiated and are commonly employed to

designate the grades.)

The general characteristics and attributions of these Grades are indicated by their

correspondences on the Tree of Life, as may be studied in detail in the *Book 777*.

Student: His business is to acquire a general intellectual knowledge of all systems of

attainment, as declared in the prescribed books (Appendix 1 of *Magick*).

Probationer: His principal business is to begin such practices as he may prefer, and to

write a careful record of the same for one year.

Neophyte: Has to acquire perfect control of the Astral Plane.

Zelator: His main work is to achieve complete success in Asana and Pranayama. He also

begins to study the formula of the Rosy Cross.

Practicus: Is expected to complete his intellectual training, and in particular to study the

Qabalah.

Philosophus: Is expected to complete his moral training. He is tested in devotion to the

Order.

Dominus Liminis: Is expected to show mastery of Pratyahara and Dharana.

Adeptus (without): Is expected to perform the Great Work and to attain the Knowledge

and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel.

Adeptus (within): Is admitted to the practice of the formula of the Rosy Cross on entering

the College of the Holy Ghost.

Adeptus (Major): Obtains a general mastery of practical Magick, though without

comprehension.

Adeptus (Exemptus): Completes in perfection all these matters. He then either (a)

becomes a Brother of the Left Hand Path or (b) is stripped of all his attainments and of

himself as well, even of his Holy Guardian Angel, and becomes a Babe of the Abyss, who,

having transcended the Reason, does nothing but grow in the womb of its mother. It then

finds itself a -

Magister Templi (Master of the Temple): whose functions are fully described in *Liber*

418, as is this whole initiation from Adeptus Exemptus. See also "Aha!" His principal business

it to tend his "garden" of disciples and to obtain a perfect understanding of the Universe. He is

a Master of Samadhi.

Magus: Attains to wisdom, declares his law [see *Liber I vel Magi*, and is a Master of all

Magick in its greatest and highest sense.

Ipsissimus: Is beyond all this and beyond all comprehension of those of lower degrees.

The grade system of the A.'.A.'. was the one known to Anton Szandor LaVey when he

instituted the degrees of the Church of Satan. Following the founding of the Church, he had

assumed the degree of Magus, but it was not until the year V/1970 that a full, formal system was

introduced.

The Church of Satan rejected the Cabalistic concept of initiation altogether. In VII/1972 and

again in X/1975 I wrote the official descriptions of the degrees for the *Cloven Hoof* newsletter.

Abridged from the latter article:

Satanist I°: When the Church accepts an applicant, it permits the extension of its power,

influence, and reputation to that person. Because the majority of Satanists pursue personal

interests not directly connected with the Church organization, the I° -

which grants

membership benefits but entails no reciprocal responsibilities - is ideal for them. In this

context it is an end in itself and should not be regarded as merely a "training" degree. The title

of the degree serves to emphasize this; one is either a Satanist or one is not.

Witch or Warlock II°: While the I° implies the Church's acceptance of endorsement by

a certain individual, it does not certify the Church's reciprocal endorsement of that individual

as an effective and accomplished Satanic magician. When we do make such an evaluation and

decide that the Satanist in question is adept at comprehending and utilizing the contents of

the *Satanic Bible*, the II° is granted. In one sense the II° is the highest recognition possible

within a true Satanic order, because Satanism is characterized by diversity of individual

technique. Once the Church is satisfied that a certain member is a capable magician, that is all

that need be said.

Priest or Priestess of Mendes III°: In other churches the priest or minister is simply a

semiprofessional or professional organizer, demagogue, and ringmaster. He is also considered

to be a shepherd, charged with the moral and spiritual guidance of his flock. The Satanic Priest

is altogether different in concept. He is chosen for ordination not by other humans, but by the

Powers of Darkness, who accentuate his characteristics and

achievements in such a fashion as

to identify him as Elect to the Council of Nine. Once declared Elect by the Nine, an individual

has the choice to accept or reject formal ordination. If he declines, he retains full control of his

Will and continues normal existence. Should he accept, he will find that his life will be warped

in unforeseen and often strange directions, as the Powers of Darkness actualize the Will of Our

Lord Satan through him. Simultaneously he will come to wield powers that will permit no

obstacle to stand before him. The Satanic Priesthood takes its name from the ancient Egyptian

Priesthood of Set, which was centered in the vicinity of Mendes (*Ba-neb-tett*) and Tanis during

the latter days of the empire.

Magister IV°: This degree is conferred by the High Priest in one of three designations:

Master of the Cavern (Magister Caverni), Master of the Temple (Magister Templi), or Grand

Master (Magister Magnus). The degree and designations refer to the recipient's expertise and

scope of magical influence.

Magus V°: This is the highest degree conferred within the authority of the Mandate of the

Church of Satan, reflecting the Will of the Prince of Darkness himself. Presently it is held only

by Anton Szandor LaVey. Like the IV°, the V° is a measure of an individual and not the

designation of an organizational function.

My first policy statement as High Priest of Set concerning the degree system of the Temple

of Set was contained in a July 15, X/1975 letter to the founding membership, abridged as follows:

As I have said or written to several of you individually, the true degrees are properly

neither “rewards” for past achievements nor “incentives” for future ones. Rather they are a

form of recognition of an individual’s position at a point in time. This concept applies to all

five degrees.

In the Church of Satan degrees I°-III° were conferred by Anton Szandor LaVey, either with

or without the aid of a formal, written test or questionnaire. The IV° was conferred by him

without any guidelines at all. The V° he assumed, being justified in doing so by the Infernal

Mandate.

The Temple of Set will operate differently. It is my feeling that any person who is rightfully

a III° has the judgment to recognize a I° or II° individual, and therefore should be empowered

to do so. Persons may join the Temple as Setians I° directly through the Executive Director,

but **no** I° will be able to advance to IIůnless he has interacted with a III° + and demonstrated

to that official that he is deserving of the higher degree.

The same holds true for the III°, except that it will now be IV° officials who perform the

evaluation. A IV° should be able to recognize a person who is Elect to the Priesthood. The

criteria are both too complex and too subtle to be encapsulated into any written examination.

The same again holds true for the IV°, with one difference in that the High Priest, upon

making a IV° Recognition, must secure confirmation from the Council of Nine.

The concept of the I° today is the same as it was in X/1975. Such information and resources

as the Temple has to offer are placed at the disposal of the new Setian, and using both these and

other tools he or she is expected to take the initiative to become an Adept in the Black Arts. No

standardized criteria are used by the Priesthood in performing II° evaluations, since “every man

and every woman is a star” and thus will apply the Art in a different manner.

It remains necessary for an aspiring Setian to seek out compatible contacts from among the

Priesthood, so that his or her achievements can be known and appreciated for what they are.

Here the initiative for contact is decidedly the responsibility of the I°, and III°s will expect to be

contacted for advisory and evaluative purposes. Priests and Priestesses III° who are available for

contact are included in the Temple of Set’s “Pool of Neheh” Internet forum.

An Adept II° is Recognized by the Temple of Set as a competent Black Magician. This

statement is never made lightly. Like an academic or professional degree, the II° signifies not so

much the passing of examinations as the “licensing” of the recipient to practice the Art in a

knowledgeable, ethical, and professional manner. Unlike the I°, in which one may remain no

longer than two years, there is no time limit for II° Temple affiliation. It is expected that the

majority of Setians will hold the II° for Earthly life.

II°s, like I°s, partake of the benefits and services of the Temple and have no reciprocal

obligations save to respond promptly and courteously to contacts from the Priesthood. The

Temple of Set remains committed to individualism, and it deliberately avoids intrusions into the

prerogatives, interests, or privacy of the I°/II° membership. Reciprocally it is assumed that I°/II°

Initiates will conduct their lives and personal affairs in such a way as not to jeopardize the

dignity and ethical reputation of the Temple.

For the Church of Satan’s degree system, Anton LaVey deliberately chose the medieval-

sounding “Witch/Warlock” designation for the II° rather than the more esoteric-sounding

“Adept”. Part of the reason for this was LaVey’s preference for the colorful imagery of traditional

Satanism, but he was also wary of being tainted by the goody-two-shoes/Cabalistic connotations

of white-light “adeptships”.

The Temple of Set, in searching for the single term most descriptive of the II°, ultimately

concluded that “Adept” was it. Like the Church of Satan, we see no reason for half-a-dozen

variations on this title; one either **is** Adept in the Black Arts or one **is not**. Thus you could say

that, as compared to the A.'.A.'. system, the transition between the Temple of Set’s I° and II°

would correspond to a transition between the (1) = [10] and (7) = [4]. Obviously this is not a

sudden transition, but the Temple of Set feels that any sort of graduated subdivision of the

process, as in the G.'.D.'. and A.'.A.'., is not relevant ti our situation. As Adeptship in the Black

Arts is non-standardized, there is no one path toward it to be incremented.

As was the case during the Age of Satan (I-X), the III° is the most essential and significant

distinction recognized by the degree system. The I° and II° are intellectual measurements and so

constitute a strengthening of the purely human mind to its maximum potential as such. The III°

identifies a transition from a human state of being to that of a divine being - ordained by,

consecrated by, and sacred to Set. The IV°-VI° are characterized by certain additional attributes,

but none of them approaches the III° distinction in essential sublimity and sanctity.

Just as the II° represents the height of personal identity, and glory to be taken in that

identity via application of the Black Arts, so the Priesthood involves the opening of a very special

kind of door: the merging of the consciousness, indeed the personality, with that of the Prince of

Darkness himself. In this working the Priest or Priestess in no sense loses personal identity or

self-awareness; rather one's consciousness is augmented, energized, and strengthened by that of

Set. Hence the Priest or Priestess - when acting as such, for "Priesthood" is a deliberate **act**, not

an office - is something more than human, something more than the individual whose human

visage appears before onlookers. At such times he or she is not "possessed", but is rather become

a veritable living Temple indwelled by the presence of Set.

It is impossible to overemphasize how alien this concept of Priesthood is from that of

conventional religions, in which it is merely a paid profession and/or bureaucratic function for

the promulgation of various institutions calling themselves "religions". As Black Magic is

properly a tool for use by magicians, so the Temple of Set as an institution is ultimately a vehicle

for the identification and formalization of the Priesthood of Set, through whose souls flow the

current of the Æon of Set. Each Priest and Priestess of Set is a Temple of Set: a *psyche* so

purified, educated, consecrated, and initiated that it has become a fit medium for the Prince of

Darkness. Nowhere is this more succinctly illustrated than in the ultimate admonition of the

Egyptian sage to Her-Bak, at the culmination of the latter's initiation as a Priest:

O Her-Bak. O Egypt. You are the temple which the Neter of Neters inhabits. Awaken

Him ... then let the temple fall crashing.

It is difficult to describe degrees beyond the III° for I°/II° Initiates without resorting to

specialized terminology intelligible primarily within the Priesthood. Ultimately, to fully

Understand one of these degrees is to be deserving of Recognition to same. Some general

characteristics, however, may be discussed.

These and their preliminaries are usually attributed to the Hermetic Order of the Golden

Dawn (G.'.D.'.) in turn-of-the-20th-century London. 81 The G.'.D.'. never conferred the three

81 Nevertheless they go back considerably farther. See Section #F & notes above.

senior grades (as they were called), reserving them to the mysterious/ supernatural “Secret

Chiefs”; they were thus held to be “astral” grades beyond incarnated human attainment.

When Aleister Crowley founded his G.'.D.'.-superseding A.'.A.'. in 1907, he made it possible

for incarnates to attain the astral by a process of consciousness-transformation to which he

referred as “crossing the Abyss”. Now the grade of Magister Templi (8) = [3] came into focus as

characterizing one capable of completely comprehending (“Understanding”) an æon. A Magus

(9) = [2] identifies one who creates (“Utters the Word of”) a completely new æon, or who

significantly expands or enhances apprehension of an existing one.

So far so good, but Crowley left Ipsissimus (10) = [1] floundering in vagueness: “It is beyond

all this and beyond all comprehension of those of lower degrees.” 82 In 1979, however, I finally

realized not only the significance but what James Thomson in his *City of Dreadful Night* so

magnificently named the “**necessity supreme**” of the degree of Ipsissimus VI°.

The Utterance of a Word of a Magus, by introducing a principle beyond the universe known

to the Masters of the Temple, creates a situation of disequilibrium and kinetic energy. As the

Utterance continues, so does this destabilization of the magical and philosophical environment.

Left unresolved, this atmosphere can result in the extremes of either the complete overwhelming

and suppressing of the *status quo* [as for example in history’s most drastic revolutionary

episodes] or in growing resistance to the “irritation” and its sometimes-violent rejection and

suppression.

What is needed, therefore, is a perspective and influence beyond that of a Magus, with the

purpose of blending and synthesizing the old and the new into a harmonious and viable whole.

In this sense the initiation of an Ipsissimus is the resolution of the tension between the initiation

of a Master of the Temple and that of a Magus.

Just as the other degrees of initiation had within the Temple of Set evolved significantly from

their Church of Satan and earlier definitions, so it was now with this

one.

“Ipsissimus” was originally nothing more than a superlative of the early Latin pronoun *ipsus*

(“self”), which as *ipsissimus* would approximately mean “utmost self”. In the 19th century this

curious term was adopted by Britain’s Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn to replace the

original name (“Jesus”) of the eleventh degree of its predecessor organization, the *Societas*

Rosicruciana in Anglia. Presumably the G.'.D.'. thought “Ipsissimus” a bit less blasphemous,

while still implying that such an individual, associated with the highest of the *Sephiroth* of

Kether (“Crown”) on the Jewish Cabalistic “Tree of Life”, could have attained a sort of “supreme

selfhood”. Since none of the organization’s original members claimed any grade beyond that of

Adeptus Exemptus (7) = [4], they felt no need to discuss it much beyond founder W. Wynn

Westcott’s official History Lecture:

... But the highest of all in this ancient scheme are the Great Rulers of the whole system who

severally govern and sustain the Third Order, which includes three Magic Titles[83] of Honour and

Supremacy. These represent the Supernal Triad[84] of the Sephiroth and are shrouded and

unapproachable to the profane and to all others but the Chiefs of the Adepti ...

When Crowley adopted the G.'.D.'. grades for his successor A.'.A.'., he endeavored to make

“Ipsissimus” somewhat more explicit. In *One Star in Sight* he

elaborated concerning this

(10) = [1] grade:

82 Crowley, Aleister, “One Star In Sight” , *Magick* (New York: Weiser, 1994).

83 Magister Templi, Magus, Ipsissimus.

84 *Binah, Chokmah, Kether.*

There is also an account in a certain secret document to be published when propriety

permits. 85 Here it is only said this: The Ipsissimus is wholly free from all limitations soever,

existing in the nature of all things without discriminations of quantity or quality between them.

He has identified Being and not-Being and Becoming, action and non-action and tendency to

action, with all other such triplicities, not distinguishing between them in respect of any

conditions, or between any one thing and any other thing as to whether it is with or without

conditions.

He is sworn to accept this Grade in the presence of a witness, and to express its nature in word

and deed, but to withdraw Himself at once within the veils of his natural manifestation as a man,

and to keep silence during his human life as to the fact of his attainment, even to the other

members of the Order.

The Ipsissimus is pre-eminently the Master of all modes of existence; that is, his being is

entirely free from internal or external necessity. His work is to destroy all tendencies to construct

or to cancel such necessities. He is the Master of the Law of Unsubstantiality (*Anatta*).

The Ipsissimus has no relation as such with any Being: He has no will in any direction, and no

Consciousness of any kind involving duality, for in Him all is accomplished; as it is written

"beyond the Word and the Fool, yea, beyond the Word and the Fool".

The problem with this definition is that it cancels itself out, making "Ipsissimus" a

meaningless term and/or state of personal being. Indeed associating it with the Buddhist *anatta*

("no-self") removes any sort of individual, personal identity altogether. 86

The most that can be said for the Golden Dawn/Crowley approach is that in discussing the

"Third Order" (the three highest *Sephiroth*) they assumed that they were talking about initiated

beings progressively closer to the universal mind and oneness of [the Hebrew] God; and the

closer you get, the more your personality dissolves into his. Theoretically this is in keeping with

the goal of the "Right-Hand Path" of initiation.

But according to Setian "Left-Hand Path" philosophy, such dissolution of the *psyche* is not

only undesirable but indeed impossible, because there is no universal consciousness such as

YHVH; there is only nonconscious universal existence, balance, and consistency. Thus to us the

three highest degrees of initiation have a distinctly different, and very

real, significance.

It is the initiation of a Master of the Temple (Magister/Magistra Templi IV°) to gain an

Understanding of the universe of conscious thought as it presently exists. Magically this is

referred to as the current “æon”, being the most sophisticated and comprehensive of a

continually-unfolding series of philosophical perspectives on reality. Once attained to this

Understanding, the Master can then guide less-advanced initiates in ways along their personal

quests that are enhanced, not obstructed by the overall environment.

Occasionally beyond the initiation of a Master is that of a Magus/ Maga, who is characterized

by the introduction of a new factor into this existing philosophical universe, sufficiently potent

and significant as to evoke change to its very core. In traditional magical terminology the Magus

“Utters a Word” to set this dynamic in motion; although the full factor requires often quite

detailed explanation and elaboration, it can be encapsulated, symbolized by a single term - such

as *Agape*, *Anatta*, *Agathon*, *Thelema* (of the Æon of Horus), Indulgence (of the Age of Satan),

and *Xeper*, *Xem*, *Runa*, Remanifest, and *Arkte* (of the Æon of Set to date).

85 Crowley is referring to his 1921 diary, *The Magical Record of the Beast 666*, wherein he wrote of taking the Oath

of Ipsissmus on May 23.

86 *Anatta* is one of the more elusive and controversial concepts in Buddhism. Generally-accepted definitions of it

tend to leave the reader even more confused! I would summarize it as the proposition that there is no isolate,

unique, and immortal *psyche* such as the Egyptians, Plato, and the Temple of Set postulate. Rather, so the Buddha

said, what people think of as their “soul” is an ever-changing “rain” of impressions upon their bodily senses from

within and without the physical body, creating the illusion of a self. Thus there is no conscious immortality,

although there is natural, all-inclusive perpetuity.

So intensely and obsessively does the Magus identify with the Uttered Word that it in effect

becomes a personal universe, outside of which reality is unintelligible and inadequate. To others

a Magus driven by this vision may seem inexplicable, irrational, even insane. This phenomenon

is “the Curse of the Magus” - that is **not** to be Understood even by nearby Initiates of

Understanding!

It is into this conflict that the initiation of Ipsissimus/Ipsissima becomes not only necessary

but, in Thomson’s phrase, supremely so. It is the function of an Ipsissimus to comprehend the

greater synthesis of an Uttered Word with the collective æonic totality preceding it, and to

delicately encourage and enhance that synthesis. Characteristically this is undertaken with such

subtlety that the will and action of the Ipsissimus pass completely unnoticed, and this is as it

should be if the harmonizing is to be perfectly fulfilled.

Beyond this the Ipsissimus also confronts the still-intersecting "ripples" of many æons

activated at various points in history, and performs workings to enable them to complement and

improve, not clash with and destroy one another.

As the Priesthood constitutes a merging of the individual soul with that of Set, so the

Magistry constitutes an expansion of that merger to a full apprehension of the *Æon* of Set. The

Master knows not only the consciousness of Set, but the reach of that consciousness and the

resultant view of creation and existence it embraces. All particular phenomena are evaluated,

placed, and balanced within the continuum of the *Æon* by the Master, and such adjustments in

events as the Master makes are for Æonic purposes - some of which may be obscure or even

imperceptible to those below this degree.

Setians interacting with Masters of the Temple are tempted to assess them merely as

"senior Priests or Priestesses", and indeed every Master is first and foremost an Initiate of the

Priesthood, invariably with a long and distinguished III° record. But the IV° is neither just an

administrative promotion nor a reward for distinguished service; it is an initiatory state of being

in **itself**. Onlookers - and Masters themselves - lose sight of this at their peril.

Aleister Crowley, who felt that the grade of Magister Templi (8)=[3] was indeed attainable

by incarnated humans, suggested that such attainment - the successful

“crossing of the Abyss” -

necessitated the annihilation of the personality and one’s absorption in the universal

consciousness. The fallacy of this, of course, is that an (8) = [3] **continued** both a particular

existence and a particular perspective. The initiate might insist that he possessed no further

separateness from the cosmos, but the very act of insistence necessitates the sensation of such a

distinction. A discussion of what this implies for holders of the (8) = [3] A.'.A.'. is beyond the

scope of this writing.

The degree of Magus - V° Temple of Set/Church of Satan, (9) = [2] A.'.A.'./ G.'.D.'. -

identifies a Master who has “stepped outside” the totality of the existing Æonic formula to alter it

in an evolutionary way. Such alteration may result in the inauguration of a new Æon, or it may

result in an improvement in or strengthening of the current Æon. The change itself may be

massive or subtle; but it will invariably be alien to preexisting values and will thus tend to be

viewed skeptically or suspiciously. Implementation of the change is spoken of as the Task of a

Magus, and undertaking of such a Task amidst the resistant inertia of preexistence is called the

Curse of a Magus.

The degree of Ipsissimus - VI° Temple of Set, (10) = [1] A.'.A.'./G.'.D.'. - was treated evasively

by Aleister Crowley, most probably because his claim to the lower grade of Magus had already

caused him such difficulty. [Initiates of higher degrees soon learn to their annoyance that a

proportionate percentage of their time is devoted to defending their suitability for such exalted

titles. The temptation is to refuse to admit to them altogether, so that one may get on with one's

work unpestered.] In any case, an Ipsissimus is essentially a "successful Magus": one whose Task

is complete.

Inherent in such completion is a unique perception of the new æonic inertia which has

resulted, placing the Ipsissimus at once within and without the æon itself. To function as an

Ipsissimus, he must work to perfect and harmonize not only the created or modified æon, but

also its entire relationship with preexisting and potential æons. Thus he enhances the Work of

the Magi; thus he ensures that the Understanding of the Masters of the Temple is not futile

because of factors beyond the æon in which they tend their gardens.

It is the Curse of a Magus not to be Understood, in that he has set out to define and

promulgate something alien to the existing inertia of magical philosophy. It is the doom of an

Ipsissimus to Understand a great many æons simultaneously: to see how they may be exclusive

yet complementary, independent yet interrelated, sequential yet coincidental.

The Initiate of any degree of the Priesthood (III°-VI°) may function in a lower degree than

the highest one attained, and in fact usually does. About 90% of all Priesthood functions take

place at the III° level, with most of the remaining Work characteristic of the IV°. V° Work is

sharp and “surgical” in nature, and that of the VI° is usually - but not always - too subtle to be

noticed.

Of all the difficulties encountered by the Temple of Set - and its predecessors - since its

inception, none has caused greater damage to both the institution and the individuals involved

than abuses of the degree system: generally the result of rash, egotistical lunges towards what

the ambitious person perceives simply in terms of increased social status. As I would hope this

essay points out, such efforts by the unqualified merely result in a handful of air insofar as the

individual is concerned - but accompanied by the very real hazards of trying to function in a

hyperdemanding capacity without the necessary skills to do so if one somehow succeeds in *pro*

forma Recognition.

It is the sacred purpose of the Temple to Recognize each of its Initiates carefully,

responsibly, and appropriately - and to encourage each and every Initiate to attain to his or her

greatest potential. Let us remember too that there is intentional symbolism in the fact that all

medallions - from I° to VI° - are identical save in background color. No Setian is “better” than

any other Setian by virtue of holding a particular degree - only more

well-traveled along certain

kinds of paths. The more we perceive one another as fellow-travelers with meaningful

experiences to communicate, the more we can maximize the very real benefits of the degree

system as it was conceived to function.

G. Æons

As far as most occultists are aware, references to æons began with Aleister Crowley's much-

advertised Æon of Horus, which he proclaimed to have followed first the Æon of Isis (roughly

pre-Christian paganism) and then that of Osiris (roughly 2,000 years of Christianity). Since

Crowley's understanding of Egyptian mythology was essentially that of the Osiris/Isis/Horus

trinity, this tied Western civilization up into a nice, neat package.

Not only was Crowley responsible for bringing about the Æon of Horus, we are told, but

that of Osiris as well - in a previous incarnation as the High Priest of Osiris [and Priestess of Isis]

Ankh-f-na-khonsu. The story of this is told in his memoir of that incarnation, "Across the Gulf",

in *Equinox* #I-7:

But Thoth the mighty god, the wise one, with his ibis-head and his nemyss of indigo, with

his Ateph crown and his phœnix wand and with his ankh of emerald, with his magic apron in

the three colors; yea, Thoth, the god of wisdom, whose skin is of tawny orange as though it

burned in a furnace, appeared visibly to all of us. And the old Magus

of the Well, whom no

man had seen outside his well for night threescore years, was found in the midst; and he cried

with a loud voice, saying, “The Equinox of the Gods!”

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And he went about to explain how it was that Nature should no longer be the center of

man’s worship, but man himself, man in his suffering and death, man in his purification and

perfection. And he recited the Formula of the Osiris as follows, even as it hath been

transmitted unto us by the Brethren of the Cross and Rose unto this day ...

In his own writings Crowley does not indicate where he came by this concept of “æons” or

exactly what is meant by it. A little detective work, however, takes us back to the days of the

Golden Dawn and the writing of a book entitled *Egyptian Magic* (#10I) by Florence Farr, Scribe

of the G.'.D.'., in 1896. This book, part of a 10-volume series *Collectanea Hermetica* edited by

W.W. Westcott, contained a very interesting chapter called “The Gnostic Magic of Egypt”, from

which the following quote:

Let us first consider the essential principles of Gnosticism, which are briefly as follows:

First - A denial of the dogma of a personal supreme God, and the assertion of a supreme

divine essence consisting of the purest light and pervading that boundless space of perfected

matter which the Greeks called the *Pleroma*. This light called into existence the great father

and the great mother whose children were the æons or god-spirits. That is to say from the

supreme issues the *nous* or divine mind and thence successive emanations, each less sublime

than the preceding. The divine life in each becoming less intense until the boundary of the

Pleroma, or the fullness of God, is reached. From thence there comes into being a taint of

imperfection, an abortive and defective evolution, the source of materiality and the origin of a

created universe, illuminated by the divine but far removed from its infinitude and perfection.

Now the Gnostics considered that the actual ruler and fashioner of this created universe

and its beings good and evil was the *Demiurgos*, a power issuant from *sophia* or wisdom. By

some it was said that the desire of souls for progression caused the origin of a universe in

which they might evolve and rise to the divine.

The Gnostics definitely believed in the theory of cycles of ascent and return to the

evolutionary progress of worlds, ages, and man; the ascents & descents of the soul; the

preexistence of all human souls now in worldly life; and the surety that all souls that desire the

highest must descend to matter and be born of it. They were the philosophical Christians.

The rule of the Christian church, however, fell into the hands of those who encouraged an

emotional religion, destitute of philosophy, whose members should be bound together by

personal ties of human sympathy with an exalted sufferer and preacher rather than by an

intellectual acceptance of high truth.

The Gnostics dissented from the creed then being taught, on the ground of the inferiority

of the hero-worship of Christ to the spiritual knowledge of the supernal mind, which they

considered he taught.

The Gnostics were almost universally deeply imbued with the doctrines of Socrates and

Plato; and a religion of emotion and reverence, combined with moral platitudes, did not seem

to them of a sublimity sufficiently intense to be worthy to replace the religious mysteries of

Egypt, India, and Persia, the theocracy of the Jews, or the sublime truths hidden in the myths

of Greece.

In *Religion in Ancient History* S.G.F. Brandon comments:

In his “First Epistle to the Corinthians” Paul had occasion to contrast his teaching with

that of other systems known to his readers. In so doing he was led to give this significant

account of his own: “Howbeit we speak wisdom among the perfect: yet a wisdom not of this

world, nor of the rulers of this world, which are coming to naught: but we speak God’s wisdom

in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the

worlds unto our glory: which none of the rulers of this world knoweth: for had they known it,

they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (ii. 6-8).

In our official English translations the proper meaning of this passage is obscured at two

crucial points. The Greek word translated as "world" here, severally in its singular or plural

forms, is *aion*, which does **not** mean this physical world or Earth, but "time" or "age".]

Paul's use of *aion* here accordingly shows that he was thinking in terms of an esoteric

system of "world-ages" that probably derived ultimately from Iranian and Babylonian sources,

and that in various forms was much in vogue in current Græco-Roman thought. Next the

words translated as "rulers of this world" (*archontes tou aionos toutou*) do not refer, as is

popularly supposed, to the Roman and Jewish authorities who were responsible for

condemning Jesus to death. They denote dæmonic beings who were associated with the

planets and believed to govern the lives of men on Earth.

As Farr and Brandon both go on to observe, Gnostic Christianity was regarded as a very

serious threat to the Christian church and was intensely persecuted. Had it become prevalent,

the 2,000 years might have evolved very differently in Western civilization - with a very

intellectual, philosophical, and initiatory religious climate instead of the intolerant, ferocious,

and ignorant horror of dogmatic Christianity.

Now we are beginning to see this term æon in a new light, if I may be excused the

expression. The *Æon* of Horus is not just a period of time when ideas symbolized by Horus are

dominant. Rather it is a *Ding an sich*, a noumenon: something of purely rational apprehension,

not perception by the senses.

Thus in what one might term the LBM sense, an æon is simply **an attitude which one**

chooses or is conditioned to adopt. This is what is meant by saying that different people

"exist in different æons": that a Jew, Christian or Moslem exists in the *Æon* of Osiris, a Wiccan in

that of Isis, and a Thelemite in that of Horus.

Accordingly, while æons are "pyramidal" in sophistication, after the fashion of Plato's

"pyramid of thought", there is no reason to consider them time-sequential, with each new one

superseding and obliterating the one before it.

In an LBM sense, therefore, the population of the world continues overwhelmingly in the

grip of the *Æon* of Osiris, the best intentions of Aiwass notwithstanding. The *Æon* of Isis is the

next influential, followed by that of Horus. The *Æon* of Set, highest on the pyramid and most

difficult to comprehend and indwell, is the "smallest" and most exclusive of all.

As with the degree system, it would be very difficult if not impossible to spend all of one's

time in a “higher æon”. When we go about our affairs in the profane world, we are usually

Osirians, peering with curiosity and vague alarm at ecological activists (Isis) or *avant-garde*

artists (Horus). Yet we experience periods of Isis and Horus too - and, when we wish to, that very

rarefied Æon of Set.

Crowley, who suggested that æons were periods of time in “catastrophic succession” - I

presume in order to more forcefully advance the cause of the Æon of Horus - predicted in the

Equinox #I-10 that following the ÆH “will arise the Equinox of Ma, the goddess of justice. It

may be a hundred or ten thousand years from now (1913), for the computation of time is not

here as there.” In 1921, in his “new comment” to *Liber Legis*, Crowley speculated that the next

æon would be that of Thmaist, third officer in the G.'.D.'. Neophyte ritual. On the other hand, he

continued, “It may be presumptuous to predict any details concerning the next æon after this.”

That is essentially my attitude as well. As Magus of the Æon of Set, I am an Eye in that

particular Triangle [or Shining Trapezohedron], as it were. The only one who knows for certain

what the next-conceived æon will be, if indeed there should be one, would be the Magus or Maga

who Utters its word.

Above I made reference to æons “in an LBM sense”. Is there a “GBM sense” as well? Indeed

there is, but - like Her-Bak - you are going to have to reflect very

carefully upon it to apprehend

it.

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Seen through the lens of GBM, an æon is in fact a living entity, in which its initiates are

“cells”. This is the secret which the Gnostics brought from antiquity, and which so frightened the

Christian dogmatists. The “god” of an æon is thus a creature of the total magical and

philosophical energy of material beings who are initiates of that æon, i.e. who are aware that they

are “components of the god”. [Are you now beginning to see the ancient origins of Hegel’s

concept of an “overmind”?]

Understood in this sense, a GBM working is a way of the “part’s” reaching out to contact,

experience, and/or express the “whole”. This is why true GBM is not even remotely like “prayer”

as the profane practice it. Nor is it mere meditation, in which the mind of the meditator merely

extends to its own limits. It is the greatest secret, and the greatest fulfillment, of unique

existence.

Once an æon is apprehended in this way, a great many veils fall away, a great many

mysteries of what magic is/ why it works are revealed, and indeed the entire “why” of human

consciousness is explained. All you need is the *noesis* to perceive it. Don’t be concerned if you

don’t attain such *noesis* the moment you finish your first reading of

Black Magic. It is there; and

when you are ready for it, It will be ready for you.

H. The Pentagram of Set

Symbols do not represent the thing itself, the actual phenomenon. It would also be wrong

to think that they are purely and simply schematic formulæ. In operational research the model

is not a small-scale or simplified model of a known object; it is a possible approach to, or

means of getting to know this object. And it is outside reality, in the mathematical universe.

The next requirement is that the analogical machine constructed on this model should

enter into an electronic trance so that it can give practical answers. This is why all the usual

occultist explanations of symbols are useless. They look upon symbols as if they were schemas

that can be interpreted by intelligence at its normal level and so lead immediately to an

apprehension of reality. For centuries they have been treating in this way the St. Andrew's

cross, the swastika, and the star of Solomon, but have contributed nothing to a study of the

profound structure of the universe.

Einstein, with his sublime intelligence, was able, in a flash of illumination, to catch a

glimpse of the space/time relationship, but without completely understanding or integrating it

into his scheme of things. To communicate his discovery at an intelligible level, and to help

him recapture his own illuminating vision, he drew the sign λ representing the trihedral angle.

This sign is not a schema of reality and means nothing to the mass of mankind. It is a

signal, a rallying cry to all workers in the field of mathematical physics. And yet all the

progress made in this field by the greatest intellects will only succeed in discovering what this

trihedral symbol evokes, but will not be able to penetrate the universe where the law of which

this symbol is an expression actually operates. At least, at the end of this forward march, we

shall know that this other universe exists. 87

The inverse pentagram against a circular field is known as the **Pentagram of Set**. This

insignia constitutes the Seal of the Temple of Set, and it is also used to identify the six magical

degrees of initiatory membership.

87 Pauwels, Louis & Bergier, Jacques, *The Morning of the Magicians*. New York: Avon, 1963.

The pentagram is one of the most ancient symbols known to mankind, dating from

prehistory. 88 89 It is significant mathematically in that it precisely embodies the ratio Φ (*phi)*, as

the ratio between any longer and shorter line section within the pentagram . *90 91*

In ancient Egypt Φ was known as the Sacred Cut. It was employed in all important

construction and artwork. For instance, one-half the base of the Great Pyramid divided into the

apothem equals Φ accurate to 4 significant figures. 92 93

The Greeks too used Φ in art and architecture, naming it the Golden Mean or Golden

Section. 94 A “Golden Rectangle”, where the Φ ratio is equal to the relationship between the

longer and shorter dimensions, appears in the works of artists Leonard da Vinci, Albrecht Dürer,

and George Seurat. In 1876 Gustav Fechner, a German psychiatrist, conducted experiments

which concluded that the vast majority of people “preferred” rectangles in this shape.

Φ also appears in nature. Most spiral growth in nature, notably phyllotaxis (the growth of

leaves and flowers), follows the Fibonacci series, where each number in the series is equal to the

88 Don Webb IV°: “William Arnett’s *The Predynastic Origin of Egyptian Hieroglyphs* (1982) shows that the

pentagram existed side-by-side with the five-line star, which became common use in the protodynastic Naquada

region (a Setian site). Five-pointed stars were found at Gerza and Tarkhan, all Upper or Middle Egyptian

protodynastic sites. The Tarkhan has a five-pointed star in a circle attached to a boat - one of the first signs of the

journey through the *Tuat*. Arnett dates all of these to 3500 BCE, but I suspect for various reasons that they’re about

a thousand years earlier."

89 See Appendix #94.

90 The concept and significance of Φ may be studied at length in H.E. Huntley's *The Divine Proportion*, as well as in

related works in Reading List Category #12.

91 The lines of the pentagram reflect the Golden Mean. Each inside angle of the central pentagon is 108°. Each inside

angle of the five points is 36°. Every line segment of the pentagram divided by the next shorter segment yields:

sin 108°

-------- = 1.6180339887498948482045868343656381177203091 80…

sin 36°

92 I am particularly grateful to Setian Rodney Scott of Australia for his meticulous corrections and refinements to

the Φ-mathematics summarized in this section, as well as in the previous notes concerning it by other Setians.

93 Assuming that the base to be 440 cubits and the apothem 356 cubits, then the apothem divided by 1/2 the base

yields:

356

---------- = 1.6181818…

440 x .5

94 This entire idea seems to have died with the fall of ancient Greek civilization; it was not rediscovered until the

16th century, when Lucas Picioli published *Divina proportione* with illustrations by Leonardo da Vinci.

sum of the two preceding numbers, ie: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34... As this series continues, the

relationship between successive numbers approaches f. 95

The Sacred Cut (or Golden Section) divides a line into unequal sections where the smaller is

to the larger as the larger is to the whole. Similarly, a Golden Rectangle is one which, when

divided into a square and smaller rectangle, the smaller rectangle is also a Golden Rectangle. Or,

algebraically, $\Phi 2 = \Phi + 1$. 96

This, then, is the “secret” of the pentagram - a fact overlooked completely by most occult

“authorities” of history. All “magic pentangles” - generally embellished with Cabalistic graffiti of

one sort or another - amount to an unconscious effort to use the innate power of the pentagram

even though not recognizing it for what it actually is. The pentagram as used by the Temple of

Set is retained in its pure form, so that the beauty of Φ is undiluted and undefiled. 97

It is portrayed inverse to imply change and movement in place of stasis and rest, and also to

proclaim the evolutionary dialectic of thesis contrasted with antithesis to produce synthesis -

instead of a foreordained and unavoidable absolute standard.

In occult tradition the inverse pentagram has also symbolized Black Magic or Satanism as

opposed to the White Magic of Cabalists and polytheists, symbolized by an obverse pentagram.

The Pentagram of Set is enclosed in a perfect circle (a function of π), representing the

mathematical order of the OU. The pentagram does not touch the circle, however, signifying that

the Powers of Darkness are not derived from or dependent upon that order.

Silver is the traditional color of the night, as gold is of the day. In recognition of the role of

Set as Prince of Darkness and counterpart to the [Horus] light of day, the Temple of Set casts the

pentagram in silver. Silver has also signified initiatory and exclusive religious systems as

opposed to open, mass-oriented ones.

The background color of each degree medallion possesses distinct significance. The color

white (I°) represents the newfound freedom of the mind from myths, misconceptions, and

doctrines resulting from fear and superstition.

An Adept II° wears the pentagram against red. Of all the gods of ancient Egypt, Set alone

was portrayed in red, and red has also been the traditional color of life-oriented religions; the

Blood is the Life.

Those who are Elect to the Priesthood of Set III° wear the Pentagram of Set against black,

symbolizing the individual's consecration by the Prince of Darkness.

95 The Fibonacci series was named after mathematician Leonardo Pisano Fibonacci . The 23rd number of this series

is 28,657, the 24th; 46,368;

46,368

--------- = 1.6180339882053

28,657

96 Some further properties of Φ:

1 + Φ = Φ2; Φ + Φ2 = Φ3; Φ2 + Φ3= Φ4; a *d infinitum.*

Φ = (1 + √(5)) / 2

Φ = 1 + 1/(1 + 1/(1 + 1/(1 + 1/(1 + 1/(1 + 1/...)))))...

Φ = (sec 72)/2 =(csc 18)/2 = 1/(2 cos 72) = 1/(2 sin 18) = 2 sin 54 = 2 cos 36 = 2/(csc 54) = 2/ (sec 36)

97 *The Book of Coming Forth by Night*. The Church of Satan again displayed the pentagram inverse, but only

together with the other symbols which comprise the Sigil of Baphomet. The Moorish name referred to by Set is

obviously the name “Baphomet”. “Khar” is the name of the Egyptian XVI Nome, whose capital was *Ba-neb-tett*, or

Mendes, and whose god-figure was the famous Goat of Mendes, notorious during the Ptolemaic period of decadence

as a symbol of sensuality.

A Master of the Temple IV° wears the Pentagram of Set against blue, the traditional color of

the most advanced and accomplished initiates (such as the Philosopher-Kings of Plato’s *Republic*

or the Priest-Kings of Atlantis).

A Magus V° wears the Pentagram of Set against purple, the traditional color of royalty,

because he is distinguished from the Masters of the Temple by being Tasked by the Prince of

Darkness with the Utterance of a Word.

An Ipsissimus VI° wears the Pentagram of Set against gold. The symbolism of this color is

known to the Masters of the Temple.

An Honorary Setian (a non-Initiate of the Temple so designated by virtue of distinguished

service to the Temple or Æon of Set) wears the Pentagram of Set against green, symbolizing the

natural universe in which the recipient dwells. In this case the Pentagram of Set appears in gold,

symbolizing the non-initiatory character of this honor.

The full-size (2" diameter) medallion of the Temple of Set may be worn with formal,

semiformal, or casual attire, but never with such garb as to reflect ill upon its dignity. Under

ceremonial circumstances Initiates of degrees I°-III° maywear it together with a black robe

trimmed in the individual's degree-color (I° = white, II° = red, III° = silver). Initiates of degrees

IV°-VI° wear either robes of the appropriate degree color or black robes trimmed in the

individual's degree-color. III° + Initiates may wear a black clerical collar.

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And now ... the magical chapters:

“Of a Neophyte, and How the Black Art Was Revealed unto Him by the Fiend Asmoel”

- Aubrey Beardsley, 1893

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18: Magic

Poor men, most admirable, most pitiable,
With all their changes all their great Creeds change
For Man, this alien in my family,
Is alien most in this, to cherish dreams
And brood on visions of eternity,
And build religions in his brooding brain
And in the dark depths awe-full of his soul.
My other children live their little lives,
Are born and reach their prime and slowly fail,
And all their little lives are self-fulfilled;
They die and are no more, content with age
And weary with infirmity. But Man
Has fear and hope and phantasy and awe,
And wistful yearnings and unsated loves,
That strain beyond the limits of his life,
And therefore Gods and Demons, Heaven and Hell:
This Man, the admirable, the pitiable.

- James Thomson

A Voice from the Nile

It is the curse and the blessing of humanity to exist simultaneously in two worlds: that of

the tangible real and that of the intangible ethereal. Unlike all other animals we are not content

with physical life's sensations; despite sober argument and methodical science we never quite

believe that "this is all there is" to our existence. We are drawn, some gently, as in fantasy and

dream, some more insistently and passionately, to - something **else**, something **greater**,

something that lifts our being and our significance **clear out of nature**, far beyond the realms

of atoms and molecules: an magnificent mælstrom of gods and daemons for whom "reality" is

but a poor crutch for brutes on the periphery of their much larger universe.

If the mystic is content to dream about this other universe and the artist to convey glimpses

of it in music, paint, or pen, it is the passion of the magician to **interact** with it. The magician

seeks to draw its presence and power into the lesser world, to change that world by its touch.

The magician fumbles at this. There are no ordinary tools Here that he can reliably apply

There, and the great rays of the gods that flow so inexorably and thrillingly through "nature" are

just as elusive. They are to be glimpsed out of the corner of one's eye, unexpectedly. The

magician struggles to fashion new and different tools for control which he, in his semblance as

sentient, natural man-beast, can use reliably and repeatedly, as one would a wrench or hammer.

To non-magicians his efforts may appear bewildering, even foolish. They are illogical. They

don't make sense. They are but "melted into thin air". Perhaps they are even harmful in that they

entice others into the same useless folly, draining energy which might better be put to serious,

practical labor. The magician may thus find himself ignored as an irrelevant eccentric, perhaps

even ostracized as someone dangerously insane.

Yet he continues with his great work, his search for tools. Sometimes he thinks he has

indeed found or fashioned just such a different kind of wrench or hammer, and he writes down

descriptions of it and instructions for its use. Sometimes other magicians, in their quest for tools,

come across what he has written and try his ideas for themselves. And sometimes they indeed

seem to work, and so another brick has been added to the bridge between Here and There. Let us

now examine, and perhaps venture out upon that bridge.

The Temple of Set defines magic according to two general categories: **White** and **Black**.

These have precise meanings which may quite different from the way the terms are casually used

by nonSetians. To begin with, neither category is inherently "good" or "evil"; the categories

encompass techniques only. Either may be used for intentionally or unintentionally beneficial or

harmful purposes.

A. White Magic

Conventional religious ritual is a device for autohypnosis of the celebrant and varying

degrees of mass-hypnosis for the audience. The mechanical liturgies have a relaxing, dulling

effect upon the mind, placing it in the (*alpha*-wave) mood most receptive to the conditioning

(i.e. the sermon or other main body of the ritual).

White Magic (WM) is a highly-concentrated form of such ritual. The practitioner seeks a

focus of his awareness and powers of concentration via an extreme degree of autohypnosis. The

technique may be used simply for meditation or entertainment through mental imagery ("astral

projection"). Or it may be used to focus the will towards a desired end - a cure, curse, etc. To

accomplish this, the magician envisions a god or dæmon with the power to achieve the goal, then

concentrates his will into an appeal. The god or dæmon then carries out the appeal, more or less

effectively - depending upon the strength of the magician's conviction of its power as a

functioning entity. 98

From a Setian perspective, all conventional religious, and nonSetian "occult" ritualism falls

under the heading of WM. Intrinsically it is inauthentic and impotent. Its power derives rather

from what it gets people to believe and do when it is used as a psychological individual- or mass-

control device. Thus, for instance, any sort of advertising or propaganda is an application of WM,

though neither users nor targets may [and probably wouldn't] employ that term.

B. Black Magic

Black Magic (BM) involves no autohypnosis or conditioning of the mind to make it

receptive to induced imagery. Thus, unlike White Magic, it is not an exercise in self-deception.

Rather it is a deliberate and conscious effort to force the mind outward - to utilize and/or either

perceptively or actually alter the "laws" of the Objective Universe (OU).

Thus it is an action to "commit the same crime against God (= OU consistency)" as did the

Prince of Darkness: to place one's self deliberately apart and distinct from the OU.

98 Crowley, Aleister, *Magick*, pages #151-284. LaVey, Anton, *The Satanic Bible*, pages #110-152; *The Satanic*

Rituals, pages #15-27.

Black Magic has two principal subcategories: Lesser (LBM) and Greater (GBM). These are

detailed in the next two chapters. Following these is a third chapter dealing with their blending,

Medial (MBM).

Ideally the magician should never use GBM when MBM will suffice, MBM when LBM will

suffice, nor LBM when intelligent, conventional actions will suffice. Much of the effectiveness of

magic is due to its exclusiveness, its esoteric glamor. To overuse it, or to use it for vulgar

purposes, is to cheapen it. One does not use fine china to serve hot dogs for lunch. Keep magic

something special in your life; consider it a sacrament and a testament to the eternal majesty of

your soul. Then you will find that it will dignify and sanctify your being, and will raise you above

profane humanity. To echo Pythagoras: “Thou shalt be an immortal god, divine, no longer

mortal.”

C. The Call of the Fire; The Warning of Noot

Magic is the operative aspect of initiation. It is an entirely new way of comprehending and

defining yourself and entities/things not-yourself. As a magician you are no longer the slave of

an imposed, inescapable reality; you exist in multiple realities, some of which you use your

wisdom and skills to expertly navigate, others of which you create and control yourself. Such

experiences and ventures can be simple or complex, permanent or temporary. You will be able to

change some of them in whole or part; some of them will also be able to change you in whole or

part.

“You have just taken your first step,” Obi-wan Kenobi said to Luke Skywalker in *Star Wars*,

“into a larger universe.” By seeking out the Temple of Set, you have taken a similar first step.

That first step is to become aware that initiation exists and that you can pursue it if you wish.

But before you take that second step, you need to reflect upon its consequences. Like eating

of the fruit of the forbidden tree in the fabled Garden of Eden, it is a step which cannot be

undone. Once you decide to be an initiate and a magician, you will have forever evolved beyond

natural-animal existence.

This realization and choice have been the subject of many legends and illustrations

throughout humanity's many eras and cultures. One of the most poignant was the story of

Ayesha, Priestess of Isis, as related by herself in H. Rider Haggard's *Wisdom's Daughter*. Guided

throughout her life by the sage Noot to accept her human discipleship of that *neter* of the natural

order, Ayesha was finally entrusted with the guardianship of a Flame which possessed the power

to transform anyone who stepped within it to personal divinity. What was not evident was the

inescapability of creative definition, and the absolute loneliness in exercising it, which authentic

godhood entails. Warned Noot:

Yonder fire will not destroy the mortal who finds the courage to stand in its raging path;

it will give him life, and with it such strength, such beauty, and such wisdom as have never

been the lot of man born of woman. Also it will give him such passions, such despairs, such

unending woes as hitherto no mortal heart has known.

There is the truth. Ask me not how it comes into my keeping and what that voice may be

which is speaking it through my lips. A minute gone this truth was mine alone. Now it is yours

also, and being yours, I pray to that Divine from which we come and whither we return again,

that it may give you strength and the true wisdom, knowing all, to reject all, and turning aside

from this glittering guerdon of enduring life, patiently to walk your human path to the end

appointed to our human feet.

Ultimately Ayesha heeded the call of the Fire and in its embrace was transformed into She-

Who-Must-Be-Obeyed, immortal and omnipotent, with a beauty such that none could look upon

her without succumbing to madness. Veiled, she endured countless centuries among those

whose human dullness enabled them to find the simple natural pleasures and contentments that

were now intolerable to her.

This is the danger of magic: that it will make you what you envision yourself to become, and

empower you to see through and beyond all human illusions. Also that, as Ayesha also

discovered, once attained, it is not reversible. Give careful thought to Noot's warning, therefore,

before you too enter the Flame. Because if you do, there is no turning back: not just for the span

of a human life, but forever.

19: Lesser Black Magic

These aren't the droids you're looking for.

- Obi-wan Kenobi, *Star Wars*

Lesser Black Magic (LBM) is the influencing of beings, processes, or objects in

the Objective Universe (OU) by the application of obscure physical or behavioral

laws.

LBM can function either by **compelling** something to happen (the selection and activation

of enforcing OU laws either established, obscure, or still-experimental) or by **impelling** it to

happen (using a mixture of non-enforcing laws to maximize the desired result's probability).

A. Stage Magic

LBM operations may target either OU components and events *per se*, or more usually and

easily human perception and interpretation of them. At the level of entertainment, such control

of perceptions is commonly known as "stage magic", and an overview of its principles is a good

way to comprehend the mechanism of LBM generally.

Stage magic, as studied and employed by professional magicians, consists not only of stage

props and physical dexterity, but also of misdirection, deception, and sensory preemption. The

effect is to make the seemingly-impossible happen, right before the eyes of an astonished

audience.

Less ethically and benignly, these same techniques have been used by confidence men to

sting their marks, by generals to overcome their enemies, by religious leaders to sway the

credulous, and by politicians to get elected to office. In their usual sequence of application, they

are:

1. **Either control of the environment or adaptation of the magic to it.** Only the

simplest "table tricks" of magic can be done without regard to their surroundings. For

most illusions to be effective, the complete environment in which they are activated

must be controlled: lighting, absence or presence of external noise, intentional

distractions from close attention, audience alertness and receptiveness. While an

illusion is intended to appear spontaneous, it frequently requires careful advance

preparation out of view of the eventual audience.

2. **Establishment of the magician's dominant relationship.** The magician displays

a *persona* - dress, assertive speech, body language, pressured pace, eye contact -

designed to seize and hold the attention of the audience, as well as to gradually but

inexorably replace their wills and judgment of reality with his own. [This is particularly

essential to hypnotism.]

3. **Dictation of the applicable elements.** The magician identifies to the audience what

objects, locations, and/or procedures are important and essential, restricting the

problem to their interaction exclusively. The consequence of this is that an object's

behavior which might seem unremarkable or contrived against ordinary backgrounds or

points of reference becomes surprising and inexplicable in this artificial environment.

4. **Definition of the variables.** An object or procedure may be used in any number of

ways, but the magician defines them so as to limit these ways to only those which make

possible and reinforce the illusion.

5. **Instruction of behavior.** Audience participation is desirable, since going through

motions to supposedly produce the illusion suggests to the audience that it is somewhat

responsible for it, thus encouraging belief in it.

6. **Limitation of possibilities.** As he controls all of the object(s) and procedure(s)

variables, the magician can force the outcome of the illusion into one which the equally-

predetermined alternatives appear to highlight as miraculous.

7. **Channeling of expectations.** Once in control of both the elements of the illusion and

the audience's perceptions and willpower, the magician instructs the audience in what

the possible outcomes of the illusion can be. It is now "impossible" for the objects or

procedures to function in any other way, nor for the audience to devise or consider one.

8. **Interpretation of the result.** Once the illusion is produced, the magician makes it

clear to the audience what it "obviously" signifies. As in his initial establishment of

control over the audience, he now implants - though announcement, emotional

surprise/satisfaction, and body language - their presumedly "spontaneous" reaction.

9. **Reinforcement of controlled perceptions.** As necessary to establish the

performed illusion firmly in "reality", the magician follows it up with as many

supporting devices and created impressions as are necessary.

Beyond these basics LBM is most specifically concerned with the stage magical discipline of

mentalism. This involves diversion of target audience perceptions and interpretations towards

a different interpretation of their own thought processes than the one which they would

naturally experience.

This is accomplished both through the above-listed techniques of magic and, where

possible, appropriate activation and blending of external psychological control mechanisms in

order to not only reconfigure the subject's thought-processes, but to leave undisturbed his belief

that absolutely no such external influence is occurring. 99

99 Cf. my 2013/16 book *MindWar* for a detailed description of several such mechanisms, or "PSYCONs".

B. Individual and Group Analysis

In addition to their basic personalities and logical thought processes, all persons have likes,

dislikes, fetishes, strengths, weaknesses, and emotional emphases. These are broadcast through

direct communication, habits, dress, style of life, career patterns, choice of friends, and the like.

In normal social or business contact, one usually sees only the "tip of the iceberg" of this

character makeup. This is because individuals in modern society are accustomed to project and

display only those parts of their characters which they feel are

advantageous in a given situation.

The magician, like Sherlock Holmes, must habitually look for clues to the rest of the iceberg

- if possible without the subject's being aware of this. If the subject realizes that what Wilhelm

Reich called his "character armor" is being probed and penetrated, he will react with distrust,

annoyance, and antagonism.

The purpose of such an analysis is not necessarily to deceive or exploit the subject. Most

often it is simply to gain a better picture of him or her, so that subsequent dialogue and

encounters can be more fruitful and comfortable for both parties. It is often remarked that the

company of a magician is stimulating and pleasing. Much of this is due to the magician's

automatic, almost subconscious tailoring of his mannerisms to a style most effective in a

particular situation.

The philosophers Gurdjieff and Ouspensky were fond of saying that most people spend

their lives "asleep" - meaning that they are content to allow their behavior to be governed by

instinctive or habitual reactions to external stimuli. As you look beyond surface impressions of

individuals, you will probably be surprised - and even dismayed - at how applicable this reproach

has been to your own life-style.

Similar considerations apply to larger numbers of people, resulting in "groupthink" among

a few and “crowd consciousness” among a more impersonal many. Business, political, and

religious leaders are successful to the extent that they correctly assess and exploit such

tendencies.

As you attempt to form more perfect pictures of people and events around you, and as you

begin to resist a life of merely reacting to stimuli yourself, you will find that you “wake up”. To be

“awake” in this sense is to be in a condition of stress, since you will be making deliberate

decisions about many things which you previously dealt with semiconsciously [hence semi-

intelligently]. You will be able to sustain this level of mental activity and concentration for only

brief periods of time. It is not necessary for you to irritate and exhaust yourself by trying to

extend those periods. Rather keep the ability to “awake” close at hand, ready to summon when

appropriate. 100

In addition to self-determined personality traits, human beings are influenced by a variety

of physical factors of which they are generally unaware. If the magician is aware of them, he is in

a position to take them into account when assessing a subject’s present or probable future

behavior. 101

This process of investigating the conscious and subconscious factors governing a subject’s

behavior is neither quick nor easy. To be done correctly, it requires careful research (which may

prove difficult and be regarded as an invasion of privacy) as well as an acquired expertise on the

part of the magician to interpret the results carefully and objectively. Because of time and

resource limitations, the magician must usually settle for something less than a complete

100 Physiologically human thinking is only about 5% conscious, with the other 95% subconscious stimulus/response

according to assimilated “patterns of reality”. Cf. Leonard Mlodinow, Ph.D., *Subliminal: How Your Unconscious*

Mind Rules Your Behavior (New York: Pantheon, 2012).

101 Cf. again the discussion of PSYCONs in *MindWar*.

picture. The more incomplete the picture, of course, the more margin for error in the emergent

picture.

The distinction between LBM and merely being a good amateur psychologist is that the

magician is specifically interested in behavior determinants which are obscure and consciously

unknown to the subject. The magician’s object is to assess the individual without it being

apparent that he is “practicing psychology” on him. The result is frequently that the deductions

and consequent actions of the magician appear mysterious and even supernatural.

C. Ethics

As you become adept in LBM, you will be tempted to use it for all manner of personal

gratification. The more skilled you are, the more you will be inclined

to think that you can get

away with almost anything. The governing factor is not whether you can or can't, but rather

whether your consciously-determined ethics allow you to.

As you begin to direct your life independently of morals, codes, and customs imposed upon

you by the politics and propaganda of society, you will have to assume the responsibility for your

own ethics. **Only if you are known to be a strictly ethical individual will your freedom**

from social norms be tolerated. Otherwise you will be ostracized and probably persecuted

by society. If it cannot be sure of controlling you, it will tend not to trust you to control yourself

intelligently unless you make it very clear that you can do precisely that. In that case society will

tend not only to tolerate you, but even to respect and admire you for the unique, creative being

that you are. The following section discusses ethics in greater detail.

Before one can consider the proper place of ethics in Setian behavior, "ethics" as a term

must be raised from a vague sentiment to something more concrete. It is, unfortunately, one of

those terms whose elusiveness has made it all too susceptible to casual and cursory use. "He's an

ethical person," we say - and leave it at that. What **are** ethics? How can we identify them, and

how should we judge them?

Ethics, alternatively called **moral philosophy**, seeks to distinguish what is good from

what is bad and to formulate justifiable reasons for making such distinctions.

As a branch of philosophy, ethics is a **normative** science; that is, it seeks to identify

principles of good and evil that transcend social, cultural, or political convention (social contract

theory).

Beyond a merely normative approach to ethics is **metaethics**, which seeks to investigate

normative currency-terms such as “good”, “evil”, “justice”, “ought”, “right”, and “wrong”. The

neutrality and objectivity of metaethics presume that such terms are not dependent upon moral

beliefs (such as religion). The metaethical concept of **naturalism**, advanced by theorists such as

John Dewey and Herbert Spencer, posits that moral terms have a basis in scientific fact.

Intuitionists agree that moral terms have an external, reliable basis but attribute it to self-

evident (“I know it when I see it”) qualities.

Challenging intuitionists and naturalists are **moral skepticists** who insist that moral

terms are completely arbitrary. **Emotivists** claim that such terms have no capacity for being

true or false in themselves, and that the people who use them are simply stating their emotions

about an issue. **Subjectivists** maintain that moral judgments state subjective facts only about

attitudes, not the objects of those attitudes. And **Imperativists** insist that moral judgments are

actually “commands” in another guise, hence do not focus at all on

criteria of truth or objectivity.

When even its basic language terms are so fraught with controversy, normative ethics is off

to a rough start. Beyond this are arguments over the criteria for making **any** kind of moral

judgment. **Teleologists** maintain that the morality of an action is determined solely by its

consequences. Some teleologists, such as Plato, insist that the perfection of the self is the correct

consequence; hedonists say that it is mere pleasure; utilitarians counter that it must be the

greatest benefit to society. **Theologians**, such as Aquinas, Luther, *et al.* , dispense with teleology

altogether in favor of obedience to proclaimed or perceived morality from a God or gods.

The sharpest attack on ethics generally comes from **egoists** such as Thomas Hobbes and

Friedrich Nietzsche (cf. his *Genealogy of Morals*) [and Ragnar Redbeard!], who consider all

ethics as verbal camouflage to conceal the reality that all actions are merely in the interest of the

stronger (who by that same strength dictate all definitions of “justice”, “right”, etc.). The egoist

position was represented in the Platonic Dialogue *The Republic* by Glaucon, and went on to form

the basis for Enlightenment “social contract” theories (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau), wherein

“justice” and related terms became just matters of agreement and contract between the people of

a society.

Accordingly it is not surprising that practical problem-solvers shy away from metaethical

issues and try rather to address questions in terms of what are generally called **descriptive**

ethics - the customs and standards of a given culture which serve as measurements of rightness

and wrongness within that culture. An acceptance of descriptive ethics as ethics leads to an

attitude of **ethical relativism**, according to which there is no standard for judging right and

wrong apart from the cultural environment of specific situations. Hence the killing of humans by

humans may be “ethical” if sanctioned by a judge or national sovereign, but the identical act may

be “unethical” if undertaken by an individual, regardless of reasons.

Until the Enlightenment of the late-17th and 18th centuries, ethical philosophy was

completely metaethical; standards of good and evil were accepted as being prescribed by one or

more divinities or divine principles (*neteru*, Forms). It was humanity’s task not to determine

ethics, but rather to understand and obey divinely-ordained ethics.

To reprise an important point in Chapter #3, the ancient Egyptians perceived the universe

as actively controlled by conscious, natural principles or “gods” (*neteru* in hieroglyphic). To the

Egyptians, all of “nature” (derived from *neteru*) was alive and the direct consequence of the wills

of the *neteru*. Nature was intelligible not just through inanimate, automatic, general regularities

which could be discovered via observation, but also through

connections and associations

between things and events perceived in the human mind. There was no distinction

between “reality” and “appearance”; anything capable of exerting an effect upon the mind

thereby existed. Justice and virtue were sought in manifestations of beauty, symmetry, and

harmony, and were personified by the goddess Ma’at.

In contrast to the Egyptian view of humanity as being a harmonious component of nature -

symbolized by the pharaoh’s position as half-divine deputy of the *neteru* - ancient

Mesopotamian tradition posited humanity as something estranged from the gods. Virtue in

Mesopotamia was thus understood as obedience to the willful desires of the god(s), not harmony

with their natural principles. Mesopotamian kings sought the “right ruling” of their communities

in accordance with the Akkadian principle of *shulmu* (later the Hebrew *shalom*), a term meaning

not just “peace” but the community well-being that engenders peace. In the Hebraic system, God

is not intelligible through reason or logic, but rather through prophecy and the history of events,

whether or not the events’ outcomes seem situationally appropriate (**theodicy**). The Hebraic

presumption of a “covenant” between mankind and a divinity reflected the notion that mankind

is given a “mission” and/or a “destiny”, and that virtue lies in the fulfillment of that mission/

destiny - whether or not it is æsthetically palatable or even

understandable. Herein lie the roots

of a certain kind of “outcome-justified” thinking that is prevalent in modern culture.

The ethics of Plato reflect his commitment to **teleology**, the doctrine that purpose and

design are apparent in nature, and that natural phenomena move inexorably towards certain

goals of ultimate self-realization. [The opposite of teleology is **mechanism**, which describes

phenomena in terms of **prior causes** rather than presumed destination or fulfillment. Modern

science is thus mechanistic.]

In his *Dialogues* Plato, through the character of Socrates, endorsed the Egyptian and

Pythagorean model of human virtue as a particularization of universal principles (an application

of his famous “Theory of the Forms”). Such Forms or principles could be apprehended through

rigorous exercise of the higher faculties of reason (*dianoia*), leading to an intuitional or *nœtic*

apprehension of the good - and a simultaneous veneration of it for its own sake. This process

Plato referred to as the *dialectic*, meaning self-teaching through the examination and refutation

of logically- or factually-imperfect concepts.

In Plato’s *Republic* Socrates is unable to directly refute Glaucon’s egoist charge that justice

is merely a rationalization for the prevailing of the interests of the stronger. Socrates can only

suggest, through the analogy of a perfectly-harmonious “republic”, that it is more natural for a

man to be just if his *psyche* is healthy and each part is doing its proper work. The virtuous state

is held up as “the *psyche* writ large”.

Aristotle, the most famous of the early mechanists, laid the groundwork for situational

ethics by denying that virtue, truth, beauty, and the other Pythagorean/Platonic Forms existed in

an absolute sense. Such values, as they applied to humanity, were rather to be sought in

moderation between unacceptable extremes in specific situations: Aristotle’s doctrine of the

“golden mean”.

Until this point in human history, ethics and politics were inseparable; the individual’s

good and the community’s good had to be pursued together; there was no such thing as

“personal ethics within an unethical state”, nor “an ethical state comprised of unethical citizens”.

The sins of Œdipus necessitated not only his blinding but his exile, and Socrates’ challenge to the

harmony of Athens was considered sufficient grounds to condemn him to death. Socrates

himself acknowledged this principle, accepting his execution as a “cure” of his function as a kind

of social “illness” - albeit one whose impact would ultimately strengthen the Athenian political

culture.

In the Hellenistic era - the period following the conquests of Alexander the Great - ancient

mankind lost its innocence. Elaborate philosophical systems dependent upon specific cultural

deities were discredited when other cultures with different philosophies and different gods were

seen to be doing just as well - and perhaps better. Materialism was the order of the day, and the

power of ethics to influence society was denied by the **Cynics** and **Skeptics**. If virtue had any

place in human affairs, it was in one's personal conduct. **Epicureanism** held that virtue could

be found in the happiness of the soul, and that such happiness was to be pursued not by mere

hedonistic indulgence, but rather by disassociating oneself from the corruption of society.

Stoicism also despaired of social ethics, but insisted that personal ethics were to be pursued by

one's labors within the social fabric rather than apart from it.

The importance of Stoicism to the subsequent path of Western civilization can scarcely be

overemphasized. Stoics, like Aristotle, sought validation of knowledge in sense-experience rather

than through abstract logic or intuition. A wise man, said the Stoics, can distinguish reliable

impressions (*kataleptika phantasia* = "grasping impressions") from ethereal ones. Humanity is

integral with nature; virtue is to be found in reason-based endurance of the natural flux. Thus if

evil comes to the good man, it is only temporary and not really evil, since in the greater sense it is

natural. The Stoic thus accepts the fortunes and misfortunes of life calmly, seeking to avoid

passionate loss of objectivity. The Stoics' ideal was a gradually-evolving "world

society" (*cosmopolis*) transcending geographic and cultural divisions.

Stoicism was the primary ethical force in the Roman Republic and Empire, and it is not

surprising to find its core principles adopted by early Christianity. Augustine's doctrine of the

"two cities" reflected the Stoic notion of a virtuous soul coexisting with a flawed social system. By

the medieval era, the "two cities" had been refined into Thomas Aquinas' "hierarchy of laws",

with social and political "human law" placed firmly beneath [church-] revealed "divine law" and

Stoic-derived "natural law". The contradictions and corruptions of such a climate spawned

Machiavelli.

Niccolo Machiavelli (after whom the Devil began to be called "Old Nick") sought to

prescribe wise conduct (*virtu*) for Italian princes faced with unavoidable problems (*necessita*)

brought about by factors beyond their control (*fortuna*). Contrary to his church-propagandized

image, Machiavelli was constantly and intensely concerned with the establishment of the ethical

society, and his manipulative techniques were justified in his eyes by the "best political results

under the circumstances" that he expected as the eventual outcome. **Precisely** quoted, the

famous passage from Chapter #18 of *The Prince* reads:

In the actions of all men, and especially of princes who are not subject to a court of appeal,

we must always look to the end.

While Machiavelli advocated the tacit manipulation of society for deliberate [and ultimately

virtuous] ends, early Protestant theorists such as Martin Luther and John Calvin regarded ethics

as being beyond the rational reach of mankind. The basis for ethical behavior, they said, is that a

righteous man will automatically incline towards such behavior, not because it is logically or

empirically justified in itself. Salvation (=attainment of righteousness) is attainable only through

the complete surrender of oneself to Christ. This constituted a rejection of medieval

scholasticism, and of the “logical ethics” arguments of Aristotle (whom Luther called “this

damned, conceited, rascally heathen”) and Aquinas. The impact of the Protestant Reformation

was to remove the rational basis and responsibility for either personal or social ethics, replacing

these with the notion of ethics as a suprarational article of religious faith - to be selectively

invoked by spokesmen for that religion.

With the social-contract theorists of the 17th- and 18th-century “Enlightenment” came a

renaissance of reason - including as the negotiated basis for ethics. Thomas Hobbes, after

Glaucon, denied the religious tenet of a “supreme good”, seeing in its place only material self-

interest and gratification. Hobbes’ prescribed social contract was thus

a negative one,

establishing an atmosphere of truce between citizens who would otherwise savage one another

mercilessly. Such a contemptuous view of humanity evolved forward into many “lower”

ideologies of contemporary society, most conspicuously communism. “Hobbes,” Karl Marx is

said to have muttered, “is the father of us all.” It should be pointed out, however, that Hobbes’

reputation for harshness came not from personal preference, but rather from a coldly practical

analysis of what makes human beings behave unpleasantly towards one another. Previously

“evil” had been excused as a theological force, or as the result of “original sin”, i.e. something for

which rational individuals could not be held exclusively responsible. Hobbes denied such

excuses.

In contrast to Hobbes, John Locke suggested that social-contract nations could exist on a

positively cooperative basis of mutual interest. It is important to note that Locke’s

prescription was based not on idealistic abstractions (such as ethics), but rather on attainable

material objectives: “life, liberty, and estate”. Like Hobbes, he sought to design a society

reflecting “basic man” rather than one espousing unattainable ideals and expectations. Locke’s

positively-cooperative assumptions and prescription for limited government based upon

majority rule formed the philosophical basis for the American

Declaration of Independence and

Constitution, to include the latter's Bill of Rights [against the government]. Locke recommended

a "reasonable Christianity" - a faith which, while satisfying personal religious desires, would play

only a symbolic and ceremonial role in political decision-making.

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The history of social-contract ethics does not cease with John Locke, but his ideas, as

immortalized in the aforementioned documents, ordained the ethical atmosphere of United

States political culture, in which the Temple of Set is principally based, to the present day. This

atmosphere may be summarized in five general maxims:

(1) Government based on law is a positive institution, not something to be

eliminated in an ideal society.

(2) Good government is a construct of the people and is responsible to them (social

contract theory), not to a higher religion, destiny, or ideology.

(3) The will of the people is best ascertained through the opinion of the majority,

which thus determines "political truth". [It is precisely because there is no

authority superior to such majority opinion that Locke placed certain "inalienable

rights" of all humanity beyond the reach of government.]

(4) As society is based upon cooperative self-interest, so the attractions of such self-

interest - for example, private property - must be preserved and enhanced as

beneficial and indeed vital features of that society.

(5) There is an intrinsic dignity in the individual human life which must be accepted

and respected as an article of faith.

To the Lockean frame of mind, these values are, in the words of the Declaration of

Independence, “held to be self-evident”; they are beyond debate, beyond compromise.

Nevertheless many other cultures do not accept them in whole or part - and **do not**

necessarily see this as a deficiency in their social structures.

As the United States aged sufficiently to develop a sense of and regard for its own history,

“pure” Lockean theory became leavened with a measure of ethical **conservatism**: an

acceptance of certain things as “good” simply because they have continued to be tolerated over

an extended period of time.

Conservatism was elevated to a deliberate ethical philosophy by David Hume, who defined

the morally good as what one **ought** to do according to prevailing passionate custom. Hume

denied that the good could be ascertained by dispassionate reasoning. Reason, he said, is useful

only to discover the most practical or sensible approaches to problems. Hence virtue and vice are

products of **sentiment**. Virtue is not approved because it is “intrinsically virtue”; it is

considered to be virtue because it meets with passionate approval.

The point of this brief tour through certain key concepts in the evolution of ethics is simply

to show clearly what all too many people perceive only dimly and imprecisely - how the United

States has developed its “official ethics”. If this background is **not** understood, Setians cannot

clearly understand why certain ethical norms are expected in this country - or understand why

some foreign cultures “mysteriously/unreasonably” reject those norms ... often on what **they**

consider to be ethical grounds!

The science of ethics is not peripheral or incidental to the Temple of Set; it is **central** to it.

Whether people hold a certain opinion or behave in a certain way is critically influenced by

whether or not they believe themselves **justified** in so doing. Once “rightness” or “wrongness” is

established, specific LBM workings will be interpreted accordingly. In order to be effective, a

magician must first **recognize** and **consciously appreciate** the ethical components of his

designs that are particular to their cultural point of origin.

Earlier in this chapter it was demonstrated that Western civilization’s efforts to apprehend

“truth” - and to answer the integral question of whether “truth” and “the good” are inseparable -

have been arduous and frustrating. The United States emerged at a moment in history - the

Enlightenment - when reason reigned supreme, and so the values of the Enlightenment's most

optimistic and practical political philosopher, John Locke, were incorporated into our

Constitution.

Lockean values have served us reasonably well these past two centuries, but what of those

countries who have "worshipped strange gods"? What do they know of "the good", and in what

respect - if any - do they hold "the truth"?

The principal social contract theorists - Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau - saw the state as a

human construct, justifiable only as it might serve the interests of its citizens. The first of two

great challenges to this preeminence of the individual came from Georg W.F. Hegel, who insisted

that **the state is prior to man**.

Hegel conceived of the universe as the manifestation of God's mind seeking complete self-

realization through a process called **dialectic idealism**. As applied to our particular planet, it is

the notion that the history of the world consists of part of the spirit of God, manifesting itself

through the collective spirits of mankind, moving onwards through logic (the dialectic) towards

completion. An existing idea (thesis) is criticized and partially refuted by its opposite

(antithesis), resulting in a more perfect product (synthesis). Hegel felt the **organic state** to be

the manifestation or reflection of the dialectic of God's mind in the world. Accordingly it might

well proceed in ways and towards goals which are not necessarily the sum total of the ways and

goals of the individual human minds within it.

The task of national leaders, according to Hegel, is thus to apprehend the “spirit of the

state” (*Volksgeist*) and to make their decisions in support of its furtherment rather than for the

citizens who may chance to populate it at a given point in time. The Enlightenment values of

individualism and rights against a government were considered by Hegel to **limit** freedom:

Since they reduce the scope and power of the whole, they serve to restrict possibility.

Hegel plus a heavy dose of 19th-century Wagnerian **Romanticism** pointed the way to the

state-cults of National Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy. Germany in particular sought to

redirect the sense of life-consciousness from the individual human being to the state. Most

Germans were able to achieve this only in a mundane sense - in a kind of ecstatic selflessness

created and sustained by propaganda. But the “monk-knights” of the prewar *SS* could disdain,

even willingly embrace the death of the individual human body according to the doctrine that

disciplined personal consciousness could be transferred to a larger life-form - that of the

Hegelian state - and that individual sacrifice towards the strengthening of that life-form would

actually contribute towards one’s greater immortality. In a very real way incomprehensible to the

mundane mind, therefore, all of the individual-death references in the *SS* - such as the

Totenkopf insignia and ritual pledges of “faithfulness unto death” - were in fact arrogant

affirmations of immortality. To Dr. Rauschning Hitler remarked:

To the Christian doctrine of the infinite significance of the individual human soul and of

personal responsibility, I oppose with icy clarity the saving doctrine of the nothingness and

insignificance of the individual human being, and of his continued existence in the visible

immortality of the nation. The dogma of vicarious suffering and death through a divine savior

gives place to that of the representative living and acting of the new Leader-legislator, which

liberates the mass of the faithful from the burden of free will.

Both National Socialism and Fascism are now ghosts of history, but the principle which

underlay their phenomenal power and impact - the organic state as prior to its citizens - remains

very much a force in the contemporary international environment.

In the United States, social and political truth is arrived at via the methods specified in the

Constitution, all of which are based on some combination of direct or representative voting. Our

national perception of truth is thus democratic - an approach which John Locke would consider

eminently reasonable, but one which would affront Plato and Hegel. To them, truth was/is an

absolute principle - not something to be determined by whim, much less by the masses. Plato

held that truth could be attained through the dialectic of human philosophical enquiry; Hegel

insisted that only God could consciously employ such a dialectic, and that the most humanity

could hope for was to sense its reflection through the dynamics of the state.

What is it we see when we look at the many “democracies” and “republics” of the world and

perceive them to be behaving not as vehicles for the benefit of their individual citizens, but

rather as cultural amœbæ of ethnocentric, even xenophobic passion which contemptuously

sweep aside appeals to reason? A few are relics of ancient theocratic systems, but most have shed

this worn-out skin only to regenerate it under the guise of the *Volksgeist*.

One may indeed communicate with the citizens of such cultures as individuals, but to

influence the culture as a whole one may not appeal just to the citizens’ individual desires.

Rather one must speak to the interest of whatever it is that they perceive their “national spirit” to

be. To seek to “Westernize” it - to alter citizens’ conception of the state into a social-contract

model - is to attack not a set of rational opinions, but an **article of faith** which is perceived to

be the very fountain of truth and ethics.

The second great challenge to social-contract individualism came, of course, from Karl

Marx. Marx was strongly influenced by Hegel, but believed that Hegel had made a fundamental

mistake in using **nations** as the basis for his dialectic and in relating it to a divine manifestation

or purpose. Marx considered the dialectic to be a function of economic struggle between social

classes, and he denied the existence of any supernatural intelligence, calling all religion “the

opiate of the people”.

Marxism, sometimes called **dialectic materialism** to distinguish it from the dialectic

idealism of Hegel, is a theory of socialism that identifies class struggle as the fundamental force

in history. Increasing concentration of industrial control in the capitalist class and the

consequent intensification of class antagonisms and of misery among the workers will lead to a

revolutionary seizure of power by the proletariat and the subsequent establishment of a classless,

utopian society.

Marx, like Hegel, premised his ideas on a **necessary, inevitable process of history**.

Thus communism would eventually come to pass, no matter what capitalism tries to do to stop

it. The other side of this coin is that there is nothing Marxists can do to speed it up; their society

must first evolve to the “last stages” of decadent capitalism. This didn’t suit V.I. Lenin, who

wanted to accelerate social evolution a bit. His prescription for doing so was the so-called

“dictatorship of the proletariat”, under which a communist elite would

force-march the masses

towards their eventual paradise. The state *apparat* would then “wither away”.

As in the case of Hegelian state-preeminence, communism cannot simply be challenged or

refuted by appeals to individual self-interest. To a serious Marxist, history is again moved by far

greater forces than the wills of individuals who may chance to inhabit it at a given point in time.

Marxist states view the advanced capitalist cultures as social bombs collectively approaching

critical mass; their desire is accordingly to avoid being caught up in the desperate external

adventurism, including apocalyptic warfare, which they expect deteriorating capitalist nations to

employ in an effort to stave off their inevitable communist revolutions.

Communism [to use the label by which modern Marxism is generally known] incorporates

two attitudes towards the truth. The “greater truth” - the materialist dialectic - is considered to

be absolute, and adherence to it is once again supra-rational: an **article of faith**. Why an article

of faith? Because the people, if given the sole power to determine the government, might revolt

against it again - particularly if it is not [as per Locke] designed to facilitate their pursuit of

personal interests. The option of further revolution must therefore be removed - by representing

the Communist Party as the “priesthood” of a “god” higher than that

of the people themselves. In

service to this “god”, lesser ethical issues are unimportant - and indeed heretical if they confuse

or inhibit the greater truth.

When capitalists seek to “reason” with communists, they fail to realize that they are

regarded as ignorant, corrupt, or deluded **by their very inability to see and accept the**

“great truth” . A sincere communist does not reason with such an opponent any more than

with a child; he seeks rather to placate, deceive, or otherwise control him.

To communicate with a communist theoretician is thus a difficult task. One must first

establish basic rapport by displaying an understanding of, if not an agreement with Marxist

theory. Immediate goals of mutual interest may then be pursued jointly insofar as they do not

intrude into ideological realms where the communist’s position must necessarily rigidify.

A curious and paradoxical picture emerges from this examination of communist vs.

capitalist ethics. In the West we are accustomed to regard the United States as a “religious”

society, and to condemn communism for its “godlessness”. In communist countries theorists

disdain Western adherence to religion and take pride in communism’s “state atheism”. But is

this picture borne out in practice?

Locke advocated a national structure in which supreme wisdom lay in the will of the

citizenry and in which organized religion played only a symbolic and ceremonial role: in his

words a “reasonable Christianity”. Our governments have since approached our national and

international problems under the presumption that **the free will of the human beings**

directly involved will order the course of events. This is vintage Enlightenment-thinking,

and to date the United States has seen no reason to subordinate it to any “higher authority”. In

terms of its political decision-making processes, the United States behaves **atheistically**.

On the other hand, communist leaders do **not** consider themselves able to control or

influence the passage of events as free agents. They may make minor adjustments here and

there, but the basic course of the future is above and beyond their control, locked in place

according to Marx’ principles of historic determinism. Like the ancient Mesopotamians, they

perceive themselves as the incidental tools of a “god” - whose name just happens to be Dialectic

Materialism instead of Baal or Marduk. In terms of its political decision-making processes,

communism behaves **theistically**.

Where ethics are concerned, therefore, capitalism holds itself fully responsible for its own,

while communism considers any and all “minor” ethical abuses automatically justified if in

service of its “god”. This is a very crucial point - and it explains why the United States goes

through such persistent agonies of self-criticism while communist countries such as China and

the late Soviet Union shrug off far more horrendous excesses.

[At the conclusion of the 20th Century CE, the Soviet Union dissolved into constituent

quasi-capitalist states. Communism as a political and economic phenomenon has revealed its

fragility. It will be interesting to see what happens to communism as a "religion".]

The Black Magician contemplating a particular LBM working must therefore determine not

only whether that working will be ethical in his eyes, but also ethical according to the cultural

mindsets of all other parties to the working: participants, objects, catalysts, witnesses. To label a

working "good" or "evil" by some knee-jerk, propagandistic formula is entirely inadequate.

[Formula "good/evil" values are merely appropriate for the profane masses, who can't - and

don't want to - understand anything more precise.]

There is thus no easy answer to the question of whether a given magical act is "good" or

"evil". In itself it is ethically neutral. As Machiavelli so clearly observed, it is the **result it**

produces which will be judged - and then it is up to the magician to determine what judgments

- by which judges - will be important. Successfully conducted, such an assessment will not only

reinforce the success of a given working; it will also ensure that the magician correctly

anticipates the **actual** consequences of its immediate results.

This chapter was intended to achieve two goals: First, to alert you to the fact that everyone

in the world is practicing LBM on everyone else, usually unconsciously and usually extremely

unskillfully. Second, to advise you that, as you become sensitive to its use on you - and skilled in

your own use of it on others - you can accomplish a great deal.

You will now have to go out and **study** the aforementioned subjects, **practice** them, and

become **fluent** in them before they will be of any real use to you. Just reading this chapter and

assuming that you “get the message” is **not** sufficient.

It is perhaps appropriate to conclude with a brief but necessary warning: As an association

of Adepts in LBM, the Temple of Set could not function cooperatively if its Initiates practiced

this particular Art on one another, no matter with what good intentions. You are trusting the

Temple and its sages to **enhance and Recognize your self-initiation** - not to mislead or

exploit you for lesser/ulterior purposes. You must reciprocate in turn. So remember this point

and remember it well:

Do not - ever - attempt to control another Setian through LBM.

Because he trusts you not to, his usual guards will be down, and you may think him easy to

influence in this way. Nevertheless it is just a question of time before either your “victim” or

another Setian realizes what is happening, whereupon you will find

yourself facing probable

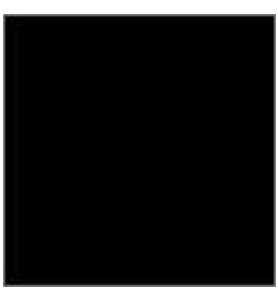
expulsion.

In all contacts and communications within the Temple, be straightforward, direct, and

open. In profane society you might be pounced upon as a “mark” or “sucker” for such behavior,

but within the Temple of Set you will find yourself trusted and respected as a fellow Initiate and

magician.



20: Greater Black Magic

There are two sharp distinctions between the Temple of Set’s principles and those of other

religions, philosophies, and occult doctrines. The **first** is that, while we do not consider logical

positivism as being sufficient to explain the universe, we **do** consider it a necessary foundation

upon which to build such an explanation. Sound metaphysics must be in keeping with what is

known about related subjects in physics, else the metaphysics are simply articles of faith. “Faith”

is how one excuses a belief he cannot justify through any rational or logical criteria.

Therefore it is not enough to feel blind trust in and enthusiasm for Setian concepts of reality

One must know how those concepts came to be formulated as being most probably true. He must

understand the reasoning behind each proposition. Initiation implies not just knowing **how** but

also knowing **why**.

The **second** distinctive characteristic of the Temple of Set is its utilitarian approach to

White Magic (WM) and Lesser Black Magic (LBM). The former, embracing all conventional

religions and occultisms, is assessed simply as fraud and/or self-delusion. The Temple of Set has

no self-appointed mission to cure the mass of humanity of fraud or delusion, so we ignore White

Magicians as courteously as possible.

Chapter #19’s discussion of LBM illustrated that many social and scientific techniques used

casually, ignorantly, or inexpertly by the rest of society are utilized by the Black Magician to

realize his immediate goals in the OU. Further that mastery of LBM

does not come quickly or

easily, and that it is by no means a substitute for cooperation with society's accepted rules of

competition, survival, and prosperity. It is a specialized technique for use in situations which

appear to be ideally suited to it, and it is generally used as an enhancement to more ordinary

techniques already in play.

Many of those who encountered the Temple of Set's predecessor institution, the Church of

Satan, were confused by the *Satanic Bible*'s approach to magic. First, in the "Book of Satan", it

scorned all belief systems and reduced all gods and demons to simple fantasies and

psychological crutches. But then, in the subsequent Books of "Lucifer", "Belial", and "Leviathan",

it promised satisfaction in return for appealing to various demons through ritual. The public

apology for this seeming inconsistency was that rituals are mere psychodrama: play-acting for

emotional gratification. But the reality was that the rituals were performed with complete

seriousness throughout all the Grottos of the Church, and that they in fact yielded the results

they promised, at least to some degree.

The Satanic Priesthood gradually concluded that, although the mythological imagery of

such ritual might be *prima facie* inaccurate and inconsistent, the particular type of mental and

willful concentration achieved during ritual did in fact exert an effect upon both the celebrant

and the OU. To the celebrant it seemed that, as his concentration and projection of will

increased, the normal barriers of space and time began to recede. The celebrant's SU appeared to

force its way into the OU in a limited, focused fashion.

What this meant for the fledgling Satanist was an experience of the "blurring of reality". It

was often disturbing and distressing, just as the experience of hallucination or schizophrenia can

be disturbing and distressing. A ritual working differed from psychosis, however, in that the

magician's own mental coherence - his sense of identity and ability to organize his thought -

remained unimpaired. He knew precisely what was happening: where each universe began and

the other one ended, what he wished to do, and how to increase, decrease, or halt the interaction.

As the Satanist became increasingly familiar with the sensations of ritual magic, his fear of

it would disappear and he would become proficient at creating precisely the blend of universes

desired. The need for OU props (a physical ritual chamber) to create a suitably dramatic

atmosphere lessened, as did the need for texts, incantations, and scripts. Ultimately a threshold

would be reached where the experience and exercise of ritual became a completely fluent one for

the magician, who could now blend his SU with the OU and accomplish changes in it as

delicately as a skilled surgeon might wield a scalpel.

An individual's SU, to be sure, is extremely fluid. It may closely resemble the OU, or it may

become bizarre and fantastic. Many clinical schizophrenics are simply those who have lost the

ability to distinguish the SU from the OU, and who in some cases are at the mercy of "runaway"

SU mental imagery.

Clinical schizophrenia is usually involuntary - the result of a physically diseased or injured

brain, or of extraordinary psychological stress. A danger of ritual magic is that the experience

may become so intoxicating that the underlying sense of perspective upon and balance between

the two universes may be neglected or abandoned, resulting in an uncontrolled blending process.

The magician is still in control of his will, but he is unable to accurately distinguish the elements

of the OU from those of his SU. He makes mistakes, which appear in his SU as inexplicable

abortions of his previously effective desires and creations. Ultimately he may lose all control of

his consciousness, becoming a paranoiac and/or a megalomaniac.

The old myth that you will endanger your soul if you dare to experiment with Black Magic

thus has more than a grain of truth in it. Not because some fiend in red tights is going to drag

you down to Dante's Inferno in punishment for your blasphemy, but rather because **you are**

now exercising your mind in the deliberate conception and construction of its own

external frames of reference. If you do this with prudence,

intelligence, and sensitivity, the

result will be a more excellent state of being (= initiation). If you do it impulsively or carelessly,

the result could be disastrous.

The Temple of Set thus repeats the warning in its introductory literature: **Black Magic is**

dangerous. LBM is dangerous because it can tempt the individual to unethical abuse of its

techniques, while GBM is dangerous because its practice makes possible the destruction of the

perspectives of the rational consciousness. E**xtreme care** must be taken when experimenting

with either discipline. And so to the specific subject of this chapter:

Greater Black Magic (GBM) is the causing of change to occur in the SU in

accordance with the will. This change in the SU may cause a similar and

harmonious change in the OU.

Examine this definition. A deliberate effort is made to alter one's subjective frame of

reference, so that a thing which used to be conceptualized one way is now conceptualized in

another. A distasteful situation may be adjusted to produce a favorable outcome; a live enemy

may be adjusted to be neutralized or nonexistent; a desire of any sort may be realized or

dispelled.

Magical manuals from the medieval grimoires to the *Satanic Bible* have discussed the use

of imagery as an aid to this process. Perhaps the most stereotypical example of this is the

sticking of pins into a wax effigy to cause harm [the origin of the quip "stick it to him/her"]. In

Walt Disney's *Dumbo* the little elephant was given a feather to hold with his trunk. He was told

that it was a magic feather which would enable him to fly - and he did so by flapping his ears.

When he eventually lost the feather, he started to fall, until he was told that the feather was

really nothing more than an ordinary feather. As soon as he realized that **he** was the source of

the "magic", he flapped his ears again and regained altitude.

Photographs, wax images, talismans, music, fires, swords, statues, and indeed entire ritual

chambers have no more **intrinsic** magic in them than Dumbo's feather. Their effectiveness in

magic, again like that feather, comes from their **significance to the magician**. If he grants

them certain powers in his SU - if he credits them with atmospheres, auras, curses, or blessings -

they will assuredly have them. They will possess these qualities absolutely in the SU.

Once this occurs, the phenomenon of the **magical link** (ML) between the SU and OU will

transfer a portion of the quality to the items' objective mass. The potency and endurance of the

transfer depends upon the skill and willpower of the consecrating magician, the scope of the

working, the amount of distortion in the OU attempted, and a wide variety of physical and

environmental factors which may range from sunspot activity to a sore toe which intrudes upon

the magician's concentration. Perception and activation of the imbued qualities by another

magician will similarly depend upon the skill and willpower which he brings to bear upon such

objects.

The implications of this principle are fascinating. Among other things it explains why

sophisticated magical workings based on a variety of different gods or pantheons have worked. It

makes **no** difference whether the gods be socially generated (like those of ancient Greece) or

personally created (like those of H.P. Lovecraft). It makes **no** difference whether the Enochian

Keys be phrased in honor of YHVH (as in John Dee's diaries), in honor of Satan (as in the

Satanic Bible), or in honor of Set (as in the *Word of Set*). Accusations of heresy, blasphemy, and/

or inauthenticity - whether historically justified or not - are simply barking up the wrong tree

from a magical standpoint.

Another implication of the operational principle of GBM is that there is a large amount of it

"loose" in the OU by individuals who are generating it without calling it by that name and

without even realizing what they are doing. Every time we have an "objective impression" of

something possessing a quality which its physical characteristics do not substantiate, we are

sampling the results of a GBM operation on the OU.

To take a few common examples: Snakes and rats are usually thought to be sneaky and evil,

birds and cats beautiful; smog and sludge unnatural, trees and flowers natural. Many SUs agree

upon and reinforce such interpretations, and in the OU it becomes increasingly difficult to

identify the phenomenon in question without the subjectively-imposed "overlay". [Such overlays

may also be called "biases", "prejudices", or "points of perspective".]

We are thus the victims of a worldwide GBM epidemic which has manifest itself as political

ideologies, artistic æsthetics, advertising, social morality, etc. We cannot honestly say that we

"live" in the OU, but rather in a crazy-quilt of SU overlays on the OU. The first thing the

magician must do is realize this; the second thing he must do is attempt to see and understand

the actual OU through all the layers. The third thing he must do is attempt to change parts of the

OU carefully and precisely through his own magical workings, both LBM and GBM.

The "unconscious" GBM of profane society works because of sheer mass, as a herd of

buffalo will break through a fence that would easily stop any one of them. At the same time this

profane effort is chaotic, unreliable, and ultimately random in its consequences.

Attempts to control such massive social forces have been made by many political and

religious leaders throughout history. All have failed in whole or in

part, even when the illusion of

control could be created. The individual Black Magician cannot change the OU through raw

force; his is only a single, isolate will. He **does** possess, however, an understanding of how GBM

works and the consequent ability to narrow his use of it to a precise, directed focus. It is this

focus that enables his workings to succeed.

If you have never undertaken GBM Workings before, some of the preconditions for them

may strike you as unnecessary, even adolescent. Be patient, and you will come to see why they

are not.

You may think that you possess great powers of imagination, particularly if you have some

skill at art, music, writing, or similar form of creative expression. Consider, however, that your

soul - which communicates with the OU through your brain - constantly receives reinforcement

of OU reality through your five physical senses. This reinforcement tends to act as a kind of

“shock absorber” to your mind, cushioning and compensating for all ideas that do not

correspond to OU parameters.

What you will be doing in a formal GBM working is to change the signals which are received

by your five senses, bringing them into synchronization with the concept on which you intend to

focus. Thus you prepare for a working by constructing an artificial environment in the OU most

closely attuned to it: a **ritual chamber**.

There is no “official” design, nor required contents for a Setian ritual chamber. Our Reading

List exemplifies how widely our interests vary, and a working emphasizing any one category of

that List [or any other concept] would require appropriate accouterments.

Thus a “classic Black Mass” in the most decadent tradition of Gothic horror novels might

recreate the atmosphere of a gloomy, medieval crypt. A ritual utilizing spacial/dimensional

concepts might make use of odd, Expressionistic angles, optical illusions, mirrored or irregular

lighting effects, and atonal or inharmonious sound effects. Workings concerned with space may

take place under the starry sky in a desert, where the absence of reflected light from cities reveals

the cosmos in all its glory ... or in planetariums, observatories, or astrophysics laboratories.

The more care you take to find or create the proper environment, the more potent the

working itself will be. This is not just because a more elaborate ritual chamber is more exciting

and evocative, but also because the very act of preparing it and anticipating the working

contributes to the momentum of the working proper.

The “ritual chamber” is not merely the room or open area in which you operate. The

concept extends to everything apart from your self - including your physical body. You must be

in good health, or sufficiently in control of your mental state of being

not to allow physical

maladies to intrude upon your concentration during the working. You must be awake and alert.

You must be visibly [to others, if it is a group working] and mindfully [to yourself] clothed and/

or costumed as appropriate. Your goal is to exclude all sensations which clash with the focus of

the working, and to reinforce all sensations which enhance that focus.

Address all five of the physical senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste. At the very

least, take steps to ensure that no distracting sensation intrudes. As you become increasingly

familiar with GBM, you will become more expert at creating environments to facilitate it. Do not

expect to get everything exactly right the first time. And, of course, there may be circumstances

rather beyond your complete control, such as mechanical background noise in urban areas - or

crickets in rural ones!

You have prepared yourself and your ritual chamber. It is the appropriate time of day or

night [or you have blocked out all sensory inputs dictating the time], and your invited assistants

and/or fellow magicians are present. You are ready to commence the working itself.

You may use a full script or an outline, or you may proceed extemporaneously. Each has

advantages: the script for formality and a sense of historical accuracy, extemporaneous speech

for its sincerity and spontaneity, and an outline for a blending of both. Make your decision not

on some assumption of what you “ought” to do, but rather on the basis of what **feels right** to

you. You might use the text of a 4,000-year-old Egyptian incantation - but you may wish to

change two words in it. Do so! Use a pre-prepared selection of gods and/or dæmons, or create

some new ones yourself. Neither type is “inauthentic”. **Gods exist as they are evoked to**

meaningful existence by the individual *psyche*.

Every thought, statement, and action during the working should be directed towards its

object. If your preparations have been thorough, you will find that you can attain far greater

concentration - and maintain it for a longer span of [objective or subjective] time - than you

suspect. Following the ritual you should not be surprised to feel correspondingly exhausted and

drained of energy.

It is not uncommon for a magician to find himself carried away by a ritual he is doing. The

experience is so impressive, so wonderful, so overwhelming that he becomes transfixed by it

both during and following the working. There is a very simple rule of thumb which should be

applied in situations such as this, and it is: **Bear in mind that the ritual itself is/was a**

personal, SU experience. If you wish to impress other magicians with it, you must translate

that experience into a form that is comprehensible and meaningful to

them. If you succeed, they

will share your interest and enthusiasm, at least to a degree. If they are not interested or

enthusiastic, do not condemn them for it. Either you have not explained it carefully enough to do

justice to it, or it simply isn't as relevant to **their** SUs as it is to **yours**. If you become

antagonistic or resentful, you will accomplish nothing save to lessen your stature in their eyes.

As discussed in Chapter #19, human beings are accustomed to projecting particular

pictures of themselves into others' SUs. This is a common LBM phenomenon. In GBM the

magician does not wish to present an artificial image at all, but rather to unveil his innermost

self. He is thus highly vulnerable and highly sensitive to external influences.

Usually - particularly in the case of novice magicians - GBM workings are best performed

alone. If anyone else is present, it should only be someone who is so trusted by and attuned to

the magician that no self-consciousness weakens the working. The more individuals present, the

greater the risk of the working deteriorating into a "living theatre" show, with each participant

presenting an artificial image to the others.

Under no circumstances should you permit anyone to be present at a GBM working as

an "observer", "student", "interested friend", or even "potential Setian". In a working you

necessarily behave in an uninhibited fashion, which will be extremely

disconcerting to someone

who is still wearing his character armor. No matter how good his intentions may have been, he

will still react by defensive, condescending denigration of the working. He is **compelled** to do

this in order to protect and reinforce his insecure, confused self-image. The inevitable

patronizing comments will be annoying to you, awkward for him, and certainly unhelpful to any

ordinary friendship or rapport between you.

If an acquaintance wants to find out what Black Magic is like, invite him to undertake its

study and application personally, just as you did. If he isn't that interested, he probably doesn't

have the self-discipline and strength of will necessary for success in Black Magic. He will be

much happier in some variation of a WM environment, wherein pageants and shows are all that

matter.

You undertake a GBM working because you want to **understand** something or because

you want to **change** something. The former type may be referred to as an **illustrative** working,

while the latter is often called an **operative** working. Each takes effect by expanding and/or

altering your SU, which then exerts a corresponding and proportionate influence upon the OU -

and other SUs - via the ML phenomenon.

An OU "law" is "a statement of exclusive cause and effect". By this

exacting standard the ML

is not am OU law; nor is it consistent, reliable, or duplicatable. This is because it is **not** an

influence or process involving **only** the manipulation of matter or energy in the OU, though a

GBM working may include such manipulation. But the essence of GBM is its effect upon the

SU(s) of the magician and/or others, which are **not** governed or limited by the laws of the OU.

And such SUs are inescapably the “lenses” or “windows” through which the OU is perceived,

assigned significance, and interpreted. That is how and why operative GBM - and the ML -

works.

Do **not** underestimate the subtlety and complexity of this phenomenon. To become adept

in GBM requires comprehensive reorientation of your attitude towards your sensory inputs and

outputs, and the way in which you realize, signify, and process information between input and

output. It is essential that you exist, so to speak, at a far higher and more precise level of

consciousness than the profane individual experiencing the same flow of information. This

generates **great** stress, which even among experienced magicians can be sustained for only brief

concentrations of time and effort. Start simply, and pursue more complex GBM as you gain

experience in and a feel for it.

You should never insist upon a complete alignment of related phenomena in the OU and

other SUs as a result of a GBM working. Such would call for a far greater convergence of energy

over a far greater period of OU time than a single mind can project. When you seek to cause

change, therefore, look for fulcrums which need only be nudged slightly to set a desired chain-

reaction in motion. Consider the most opportune times and locations for change. And do enough

preliminary research to ascertain that the picture you have of the preexisting situation is a

reasonably accurate one - else you may unknowingly change it for the worse.

There is no standard sequence for a GBM working. Each is tailored to its object and to the

magician undertaking it. Setians will find many texts, instructions, and sample scenarios in

Temple of Set resources such as the *Jeweled Tablets*, the *Scroll of Set* (including its back-issue

collection), and the Temple Intranet. These are tools which others have used successfully, for the

specific purposes indicated. You may use any such tool for its original purpose, or pick and

choose parts of various tools, and/or construct entirely new tools of your own. The more you

work with GBM, the more fluent you will become with these options.

The Temple of Set, in keeping with this philosophy, has no “official” GBM working rules. It

is our position that “the text of another is an affront to the self”. The following sequence is thus

provided as an **example** of how a GBM working might be undertaken. You may adapt it as you

desire, or you may create workings which are uniquely your own.

* * * * *

1. Prepare the Chamber

Choose a time and location suitable to your theme, considering privacy, comfort, and its

psychological impact upon you. Decorate it as appropriate.

Black is the traditional color of Black Magic [stands to reason!], because of its mystery,

solemnity, and capacity for dissolving sensory limits and barriers. Paint or drape a room in black

and you will see that it **expands** rather than confines the space. Flat black is more effective at

dissolving barriers [imparting the sensation that you are “floating in space”], while gloss black

creates a mirror-like effect that suggests an “angular matrix” about you.

Other evocative colors may be used, but avoid white, pastels, and “head shop” posters.

Natural wood, earth, or stone is excellent; some of the most effective chambers are constructed

from/in unused attics or cellars.

Lighting should be by candles, fires, electric candles, or colored light sources. Ultraviolet

light may be used with great effectiveness because of the “sparkle” that it imparts to the

atmosphere, the negative ions it generates, and the exotic visual effects it produces. Avoid using

it in conjunction with predesigned UV-sensitive pictures or posters,

and conceal the light-source

if at all possible. **Avoid looking directly into ultraviolet light tubes, especially for**

extended periods. Avoid also extensive or concentrated exposure to ozone gas,

whether from UV or electrostatic-generation sources. Use minimum necessary lighting

- one or two candles rather than a dozen. You can see much better in semidarkness than you

think you can. [Rituals may also be conducted wholly or partially in complete darkness, which is

one way of creating an “instant ritual chamber” in the midst of an otherwise unsuitable

environment.]

If you use recorded music, take care that it is not so rigidly sequenced that you have to

march the working in time to it. Otherwise the music, not you, is conducting the working.

“Workings” designed around musical or visual effects are “pageants” and thus fall under the

heading of LBM - designed to influence audiences or specific participants.

An altar may be constructed out of almost anything of convenient size. When it is serving as

an altar, ensure that it is not used for any other purpose. Indeed this holds true for **all** ritual

implements. A ceremonial dagger or knife will not be the worse for being used to carve a turkey

at dinner, but in your SU you will never regard it in quite the same way if you suffer it to be used

for mundane purposes.

Behind and above the altar should appear the Pentagram of Set in silver or red against a

black field. Prismatic (fresnel) material is fine for the Pentagram, and other colors may also be

used if meaningful to the magician. If any other emblem is used, as in a specialized or historical

working, it should be displayed either beneath the Pentagram or in another location entirely.

Atop the altar should be [at minimum] a bell, a goblet or chalice (hereafter called the Grail),

and a central flame source (which may range from a large or ornate candle to a small oil or

jellied-fuel brazier). The flame source should ideally produce a blue-black or blue flame; Sterno

is ideal; an electronic-lightning source such as a Tesla coil or “Eye of the Storm” will also suffice.

Any texts required for a ritual may be placed upon the altar, as may additional candles, sword,

knife, dagger, staff, and/or wand. Add whatever else you desire, from talismans and statuettes to

flowers and foliage.

The Church of Satan used to use a naked female as a “living altar” centerpiece, ostensibly to

symbolize carnality and the living Earth. It was a nice idea in theory, but it proved difficult in

practice. It is always awkward for one person to be nude while everyone else is clothed. An

attractive “living altar” tends to distract participants’ concentration, while an ugly one can be

repellent; and of course no two people see “beauty” and “ugliness” in the same way. A large,

sturdily-built altar platform is necessary, and sex always complicates matters with questions

concerning the appropriateness of male altars for female heterosexuals or male homosexuals,

etc. By all means use a “living altar” if you wish to, but don’t feel he/she is essential or even

desirable for a successful working.

No protective circles or pentacles on the floor [or anywhere else] are necessary, though you

are welcome to add them for dramatic or symbolic purposes. Since the Black Magician is at One

with the Powers of Darkness, he needs no “protection” from them. Nor, it may be said, are circles

or pentacles the slightest deterrent to these Powers, save in the SU of a superstitious White

Magician.

Children should never be allowed to attend any GBM working. They will not

understand it, may be frightened by it, and may wrongly represent it to others. Pets may be

present only if they can be depended upon to enhance, not to disrupt the atmosphere.

Under no circumstances is any life-form ever sacrificed or injured in a Black

Magical working of the Temple of Set. Violation of this rule will result in the

offender’s immediate expulsion and referral to law enforcement or animal

protection authorities.

The purpose of this statement is to prohibit any intentional taking or injuring of life in such

a working. Obviously this applies to the bigger, more visible, more tangible, more familiar

humans and animals. But just as certainly it applies to **any other** life-form over which you have

aware, discretionary control. If you crush some captured ants, or burn a living plant, etc. in a

ritual, then you are in violation of this principle.

It is the element of "aware, discretionary control" that is key here, because at issue is your

respect for the phenomenon of life *per se*. Beyond the reach of your senses, you cannot

reasonably exercise such control, and that is that. Probably every time you open and close your

mouth while uttering incantations, you crush to death a great many microscopic residents of

your teeth and gums. And you are certainly not expected to perform magic only in a laboratory

"clean room"! Use common sense, compassion, and especial sensitivity, and you will fulfill the

intent of this guideline.

2. Dress for Working

Dress however you wish, as long as it reflects the serious atmosphere of the working. The

Temple of Set medallion appropriate to your degree should be worn. There are no color or design

guidelines or restriction concerning magical clothing and costumes. If a robe or cowled robe is

worn, however, it should be black. Colored trim or cords for black robes, if used, is traditionally

keyed to the Temple's initiatory degrees: I° = white, II° = red, III ° = silver, IV° = blue, V° = purple,

and VI° = gold.

3. Ring the Bell

The bell, which should have a deep, melodious tone rather than a sharp, tinkling one, is

used to formalize the beginning and end of the working. It should be tolled nine times, either

towards the altar or at the four points of the compass as the magician turns counterclockwise.

The number 9 honors the Council of Nine of the Temple of Set. The magical significance of the

number 9 is also discussed in my "Ceremony of the Nine Angles" and Anton LaVey's "The

Unknown Known" in #6L, as well as in Pythagorean lore (#12).

4. Light the Black Flame

The central flame source on the altar symbolizes the Black Flame of Set, which brought

isolate self consciousness to higher life. It is the willful act of rekindling this Flame on the altar

which opens a "Gate" of interconsciousness between the magician and the Powers of Darkness.

5. Invocation

In the name of Set, the Prince of Darkness, I enter into the Realm of

Creation to work my will upon the Universe. O Majesty of Set, hear me,

look upon me, and go with me upon this journey. Enfold me with the

Powers of Darkness; let them become as One with me as I am become

One with the Eternal Set, whose Seat is behind the Constellation of the

Thigh. As I send forth my most exalted and sublime Self, arm it with the

Pentagram of Set and with the sceptre of Tcham that it may defy all

constraints, dismay all challengers, and cast down all that is moved to

appear against it.

Let then my eyes become the Eyes of Set, my strength become the

Strength of Set, my will become the Will of Set. As a Fire in the Darkness I

am Become; as Air in the Sky I am Become; as Earth in Space I am

Become; as Water in the Desert I am Become. I dwell in the Fane of the

Flame of *Ba*. Time bows before my will, and I am Lord of Life, Death, and

Life in Death. Hear then this Doom which I pronounce, and beware the

Ka which now Comes Into Being through that Art which is mine to

command.

6. Drink from the Grail

The Grail should contain any pleasing liquid, the more unusual and aromatic the better.

The liquid need not be alcoholic and **must not** be blood. [The use of blood for ceremonial

purposes would represent the destruction of a life-force. The magician respects blood in its

proper vessel, the body, and does not degrade it.]

The liquid may be imbibed only by the celebrant, or it may be shared with others present. If

it is to be shared, the liquid should appear initially on the altar in a suitably ornate flask, then be

poured into individual goblets or chalices by the celebrant or an assistant during this phase of

the working. It is not recommended that more than one participant share a single goblet. [The

goblets need not match; each participant may wish to bring the one from his own ritual

chamber.]

In the Church of Satan the Grail was called the “Chalice of Ecstasy”, and its contents

symbolized the elixir of life.

In the Temple of Set it assumes an elder and more esoteric identity. The pre-Christian Grail

is one of the most ancient and powerful symbols of the European Black Magic tradition (#14B, C,

D, U). It symbolizes Truth in its purest and most sublime Form. The Grail is ever sought, never

found by the profane, for they fear Truth even when they profess otherwise. Should they chance

upon the Grail through innocence or accident, they dash it from their lips in terror or, upon

drinking from it, come hideously to grief for their rashness. Only the Initiate of the Left-Hand

Path may dare to drink from the Grail with impunity, and only he shall see it brought forth

before him whenever he desires. Woe to him who drinks from the Grail with deceit and

falsehood in his heart; it shall consume him utterly.

“The Knights of the Grail live from a stone of purest kind.

If you do not know it,

It shall here be named to you.

It is called *lapsit exillis*."

- Wolfram von Eschenbach, *Parsival*

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"Hic *lapis exilis* extat precio quoque vilis

Spernitur a stultis, amatur plus ab edoctis."

[This insignificant stone is indeed of trifling value.

It is despised by fools, the more cherished by the wise.]

- Arnold of Villanova, *Rosarium Philosophorum*

7. Summoning of the Elements

The magician now calls upon the living creatures and inert elements whom/which he

wishes to observe or control. He may do this by using their conventional names, or by invoking

symbols of them in isolation or combination (gods, dæmons, chemical or alchemical symbols,

images, musical themes, or other media of description). He weaves around them the appropriate

context of his SU, thus creating what he wishes to Come Into Being.

8. The Working

Upon construction of the working environment, the magician proceeds to enter it, observe

what he desires to, and change what he wishes to. This is a precise, methodical, carefully

conceived and executed action. It is "Astral projection" in the strictest sense. (#9G/H "Liber O",

#9K)

Briefly the technique is this: The magician constructs within his SU a "magical double" or

ka (Goethe's *Doppelgänger*). This is an idealized entity whose precise characteristics may vary

from working to working. He then, by an act of will, transfers his soul or *ba* to the vehicle of this

ka and then executes his will in the SU. This may be completely disassociated from the physical

body of the magician, or it may be closely aligned with it. Physical alteration of imagery in the

ritual chamber may play a part, as may actions and expressions through the magician's material

body.

At the conclusion of the working, the *ba* is redirected to the physical body and the *ka* is

dispelled. The elements of the SU specifically summoned for the working are released into their

normal contexts, there to influence their OU counterparts.

Vast amounts of advice concerning "Astral projection" and the construction and use of a

magical double have been proffered. There is no one best technique which works for everyone.

You will have to experiment, turning your mind and consciousness "in upon themselves" to

explore, understand, and control their functions and parameters. Be careful and gentle with

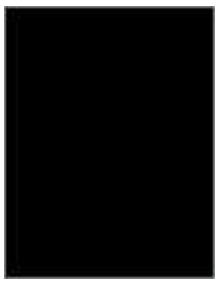
yourself. Do not hesitate to ask the Priesthood of Set for advice if in doubt.

9. Extinguish the Black Flame/Close the Gate

10. Ring the Bell [as in Step #3].

11. Utter the Traditional Closing Words: "So It Is Done!"

* * * * *



21: Medial Black Magic

Over the years we have become accustomed to the Temple of Set's two major divisions of

Black Magic: Lesser (LBM) and Greater (GBM). By the former we generally refer to applied/

scientific/manipulative magic; by the latter to introspective ceremonies of *nœtic* solemnity.

It is easy to focus strongly and exclusively on either one or the other of these two categories,

so much so that we miss that grey area wherein they blend. Let us call this **Medial Black**

Magic (**MBM**).

MBM involves the use of the magical link (ML) in its simplest, most direct form in an

operative context. Unlike LBM, in which the magician uses forces and features which are **of** the

OU to accomplish his goal, MBM has similar goals but uses metaphysical means - the ML - to

realize them. It is not as “pure” as true GBM (which has no purpose other than itself).

The beauty of MBM is its simplicity and directness. It requires only so much formality as

you feel appropriate to what you wish to do. Grimoires, spellbooks, even the famous curse/lust/

compassion rituals of the *Satanic Bible* are needlessly overcomplicated and are just so much

window-dressing for persons who need such “training wheels” to work up a proper mental/

magical state of concentration.

Dark Shadows, that charming occult soap-opera of the 1960s, got it right. When Angelique

the witch felt the need to curse, confound, or [rarely!] help someone, she would simply light a

candle, or gaze into a fireplace, or stare at the Moon, and dictate her will. And so it would come

to pass. Seances and Tarot readings worked, not because they were elaborate frauds or because

the people participating in them were gullible fools, but because the participants approached

them with simple open-mindedness.

However, and this is an important point, MBM is not just “making a wish” or “saying a

prayer”, because these things involve no will, nor even sincerity. MBM requires your **will** that

the result you desire actually occur.

Unlike LBM, there is no calculable cause-and-effect. If you are using proxemic magic

(LBM), you can reliably count on keeping someone in a room, driving him out of it, altering his

mood, etc. because of the physiological and psychological principles you are applying. As a stage

magician (also LBM) you can trick or control people by things that may **seem** to be MBM but

aren’t.

When you resort to MBM, you enter that Twilight Zone between physics and metaphysics.

The ML may or may not work, or it may work in some unexpected way [not necessarily to your

satisfaction]. You may try MBM and get good, regular results. You may get nowhere and

conclude that, for you anyway, it is a waste of time and an intellectual insult. Or you may find it a

kind of mix of the two.

Keeping MBM simple doesn't mean that you can't use more elaborate

systems for it if you

prefer. Just don't feel that you are forced to recite some long, dreary ritual text to accomplish

something. A more direct ritual, which you understand and project coherently, will serve you

better. Remember Angelique! Because in Black Magic there is no turning back.

The Beginning

- Mark Thornally II° (2014 CE)

Renunciation

Now I have taken leave of memories,

I am gone down to the grey wave of prose,

That not ungracious wave which ebbs and flows

In softly pulsed irregularities,

The effort breaking slowly into ease,

The long, low, unimpassioned swell that goes

To the most cryptic distances one knows

Of noncommittal, silver-ebbing seas.

Come over me, and cover all my mind -

My truant mind - and take her into you,

Grey, temperate wave, lest she be gone along

The beach and over the hills to find

The path beneath the cypresses we knew,

Or the green path that ended like a song.

- Betty Ford III° (1925 CE)

302 East Calle Laureles, William Murray and Michael Aquino, the day of the 22nd & Kansas

Santa Barbara, California, meeting, San Francisco, California

site of the North Solstice X

Working

Meg Longoria and Robert Ethel

Brandy Aquino and James Lewis

THE MAGUS

Dale Seago, Lilith Sinclair, William Murray

Robertt Neilly

Roland Holt and Michael Aquino

Visiting dæmon & William Murray

contemplating one another

Jinni Bast, Marie Kelly, James Lewis

Willie Browning, Robert Menschel, Dale Seago

Margaret Wendall and Betty Ford

Yole Patterson

Lilith Sinclair and Jinni Bast

Ricco Zappitelli

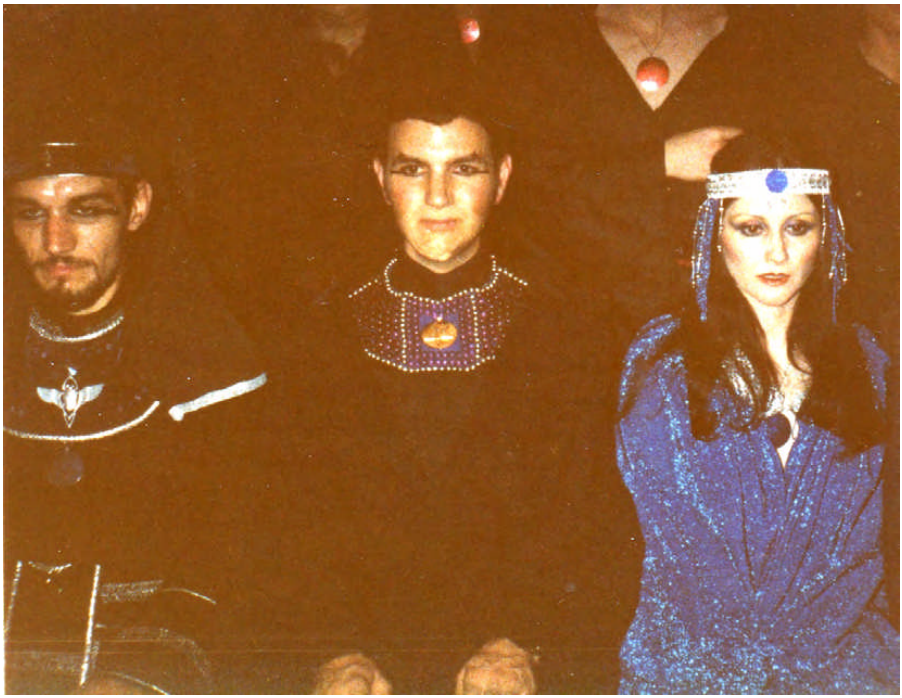
- 243 -

Linda Reynolds, Lilith Sinclair, Michael Aquino

Alexandra Sarris and Robert Menschel

James Lewis and Dale Seago

Linda Thomas and Jerry Reynolds



Ronald K. Barrett and Lilith Sinclair

The “Egyptian eyes” experiment:

Ronald K. Barrett, Michael Aquino, Lilith Sinclair

Constance and Robert Moffatt

Colleen Huddleston, Ronald K. Barrett, Stephen Bushey, Janet Menschel

Robert Moffatt, Lynn Norton, Lilith Sinclair

Robert DeCecco, Lilith Sinclair, Ronald K. Barrett

Michael Aquino with Priesthood-Presented Medallion, Set-1 Conclave

David Austen James Lewis and Robertt Neilly

Patricia Hardy and Robert Menschel Mitchell Wade

- 250 -

Nancy Flowers, Linda Reynolds, Ronald L. Barrett

Zeena & Nikolas Schreck and Don Webb Peter Rivera

Robert Brink and Alexandra Sarris Eric Kauschen

Michael Aquino and Stephen Flowers

The Wewelsburg to the SE tower

The Wewelsburg to the North Tower

Wewelsburg Main Entrance

Wewelsburg Courtyard to the North

Tower Grail Hall door

The Red & Black Candles in the Grail

Vehm Sigil in the Grail Hall

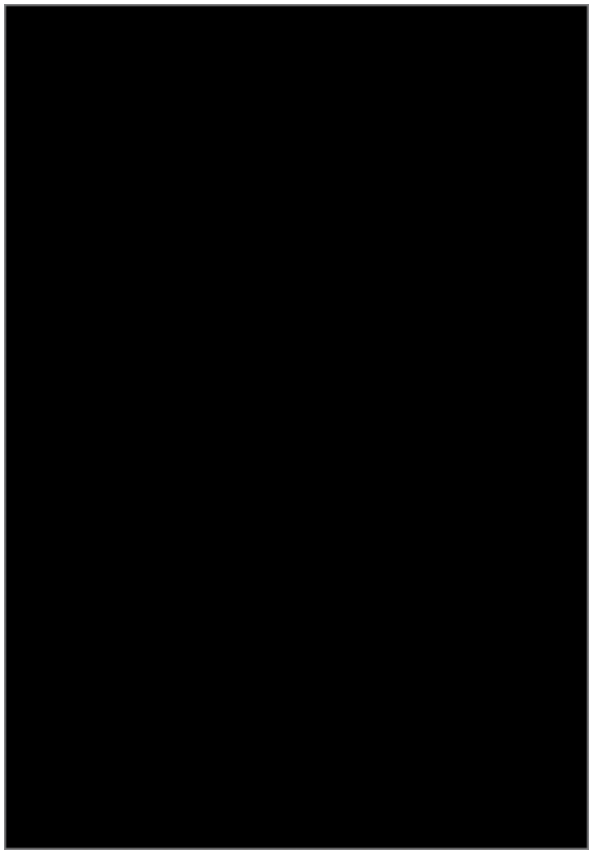
Hall prior to the Wewelsburg Working

Entrance to Walhalla

Michael Aquino in the Walhalla

And So It Is Done.

prior to the Wewelsburg Working



About the Author

Michael A. Aquino was the only member of the Church of Satan to attain the Second Level of the Fourth

Degree (Magister Templi IV°-II') prior to 1975, and was a member of the Church's Council of Nine and Order of the

Trapezoid 1970-75. He served as Editor of the Church's *Cloven Hoof* newsletter 1971-75.

He served as founding High Priest of the Temple of Set 1975-1996, was Recognized as an Ipsissimus VI°, and

was founding Grand Master of the Temple's Order of the Trapezoid 1982-87.

In secular life he is a Lt. Colonel, Psychological Operations, U.S. Army (Ret.). He is a graduate of the

Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University; Defense Intelligence College, Defense

Intelligence Agency; Foreign Service Institute, Department of State; U.S. Army Special Warfare Center (Special

Forces (“Green Beret”)/Psychological Operations/Civil Affairs/ Foreign Area Officer); U.S. Army Command &

General Staff College; U.S. Army Intelligence School, and U.S. Army Space Institute. Decorations include the Bronze

Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal (3 awards), Special Forces Tab, Parachutist

Badge, USAF Space & Missile Badge, and the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross, Psychological Warfare Medal

(First Class), & Air Service Medal (Honor Grade).

Academic credentials include the B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of California,

Santa Barbara; and the M.P.A. in Public Administration from George Washington University. He has taught as

Adjunct Professor of Political Science, Golden Gate University 1980-86.

In 2006, following his retirement as a U.S. government officer, he was recognized by Scotland’s Lord Lyon

King of Arms as the 13th Baron of Rachane, Argyllshire. He is a member of Clan Campbell.

He, his wife Lilith, and inevitable cats live in San Francisco, California.